THE IMMORTAL THOR

"Brimming with humor, horror, heartbreak and humanity."
— Comic Watch

EWING
CÓCCOLO
ROBERSON
MAGNO
WILSON

MARVEL

ALL TRIALS ARE ONE

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6 VARIANT BY **JULIAN TOTINO TEDESCO**

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> “ULLR’S AND ALL THE GODS’
> FAVOUR SHALL HAVE, WHOEVER
> FIRST SHALL LOOK TO THE FIRE.”
>
> - THE LAY OF GRIMNIR,
> THE ELDER EDDAS OF SAEMUND SIGFUSSON

"ULLR'S AND ALL THE GODS' FAVOR SHALL HAVE-- WHOEVER FIRST SHALL LOOK TO THE FIRE!!!"
WHAT AM I LOOKING AT...?
MAGIC.
KEEP READING.
ULLR.
HE WHOSE NAME GAVE SHAPE TO VISIONARY, SEER AND POET.
THE MAKER OF MAGICS, WHO RIDES A SHIP OF BONE ON UNKNOWN SEAS.
ULLR, WHO AT BRAGI'S CALL FIRST STOKED THE YEW-FIRE THAT BURNS FOR MANY DAYS. THE SECRET FIRE THAT HAS MANY SERVANTS.
THE TELLING-FIRE...

...AROUND WHICH MAGIC WORDS ARE SPOKEN.
AROUND WHICH SKALDS TELL THEIR TALES.
BOW-GOD, THE MORTALS SAY. THOR'S STEPSON BY SIF, THE MORTALS SAY.
THOUGH HIS TRUE FATHER--AND MOTHER--ARE UNKNOWN...
AYE. MORTALS DO SPEAK WITH GREAT KNOWLEDGE ON WHAT THEY KNOW NOT.
BUT PERHAPS IN THIS INSTANCE, THEY ARE CLOSE TO THE TRUTH. AS ALL-FATHER, I BEAR THE DUTY OF KIN TO ALL THE AESIR, BE THEY NEAR OR FAR.
AND IF LOST ULLR IS E'ER FOUND, MY HAMMER IS AT HIS SERVICE...THOUGH NO MORTAL WHO KNEW HIS FULL LEGEND WOULD SLEEP ONE UNTROUBLED NIGHT.
THE LORD OF THE YEW-TREE OF DOOM AND DEATH.
WHOSE WOOD IS BEST FOR THE BOW...BECAUSE IT GROWS MURDER.
A FIRE OF YEW SPITS AND ROARS. THE FIRE IS POWERFUL. AND HERE IN YDALIR, ULLR'S OWN HALL...THE MAGIC IS POWERFUL.
GREAT MAGIC FOR A GREAT TALE, WHICH DRAWS BOTH TELLER AND AUDIENCE IN. A TALE NOT HEARD...BUT LIVED.
AND TO LIVE A TALE...EVEN ONE YOU THINK YOU KNOW...
...MAY BE TO DIE IN IT.

FOR A TALE RETOLD MAY NOT GO AS YOU REMEMBER...
MEMORY IS ALWAYS A TRICKSTER, LOKI. ONE WORTH TWO OF EVEN YOU.
MY KNOWLEDGE OF UTGARD, AND UTGARD'S GODS, IS RECALLED FROM ANCIENT ADVENTURES IN ANCIENT DAYS...
...ANCIENT MEMORIES THAT MAY NOT BE FULLY TRUSTED.
AND NOW I HAVE LEARNED THAT MY MOTHER GAEA HAS MADE SOME DEAL WITH THE ELDER GODS OF THAT LONG-SEALED LAND--LIKE BRUTAL TORANOS.
THUS, I MUST CONFRONT HER.
I WOULD DO SO ARMED WITH THE TRUTH.
BUT WHAT IS TRUTH?
EVEN A TRUE TALE MAY TWIST AND TURN. IT IS A THING ALIVE--AND THE TRUTH IT REVEALS MAY BE THAT YOU ARE DEAD.
YOU CALL ON ME AS THE SKALD OF REALMS, THOR. AS THE TELLER OF TALES.
BUT IN THIS ASPECT...I AM ALSO YOUR ENEMY.
AND I AM THE LOKI WHO WILL KILL YOU.

I BELIEVE IT, LOKI. YOU **ARE** MY ENEMY.
AND I TRUST YOU TO BE SO-- FOR THE STORYTELLER MUST OFT **BE** THE ENEMY, FOR THE STORY TO HAVE **WEIGHT**. I WILL NOT BE **CODDLED**, SKALD.
IN THIS, **I AM THINE ALL-FATHER**--AND I MUST **KNOW** WHAT I MUST **KNOW**.
THEN THERE IS NO MORE TO BE SAID.
SAVE FOR THE **MAGIC WORDS**...
ONCE
UPON
A
TIME...

...IS AGAINST US, BROTHER.
AND THERE ARE FORCES TO WHICH EVEN A GOD MUST BOW.
IF WE WANT TO REACH HOME BEFORE NIGHTFALL, WE MUST TURN BACK NOW.
WE WALK AT THE VERY EDGE OF ASGARD'S TERRITORY--
PFFT. I KNOW THE WHERE OF US.
YET I WILL TELL IT. WE STAND AT VIMUR, OLDEST OF RIVERS.
THE ICY FJORD THAT HATH FLOWED, DEEP AND SWIFT, SINCE THE REALMS BEGAN, AND THAT THY FATHER ODIN BADE US NE'ER TO CROSS...
...LEST THE SKY FALL AND--
WHAPP
OWW!
YOU BIG BULLY! WHAT WAS THAT FOR?
IMPERSONATING MY KIN, THOU BASE IMPOSTOR!
WHO IS THIS WHO CALLS THEMSELF LOKI YET LIVES BY RULE AND LAW?
TAKE THY TRUE SHAPE, VILLAIN! THOR COMMANDS IT!
OWW! GERROFF! THAT EAR'S ATTACHED!
FINE! YOU WIN!
AH! IT IS THE TRUE LOKI, AFTER ALL--I KNOW BY THE COWARD'S SQUEAL.
COME, MISCHIEF-MAKER! WE HAVE A BRIDGE TO CROSS!

THAT DOESN'T SEEM STRANGE TO YOU, THOR? WE'VE WALKED BY VIMUR A HUNDRED TIMES ON OUR ADVENTURES, AND--
WAIT. I HAVE A QUESTION OF MY OWN, BEFORE WE CONTINUE.
WAS I TRULY SO UNKIND, IN THOSE DAYS? SO CRUEL?
MOSTLY. SOMETIMES BETTER, SOMETIMES WORSE.
IT WAS BEFORE YOU LEARNED HUMILITY, DON'T FORGET.
IT WAS WRONG OF ME TO TREAT YOU SO. WE WERE KIN.
I DO REGRET IT, LOKI.
...
WE ALL HAVE REGRETS.
BUT BACK TO THE TALE.
AS I WAS SAYING, THOR, YOU IMPULSIVE OAF-- THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A BRIDGE AT THIS SPOT BEFORE. NOT ONCE.
ALL THE MORE REASON TO CROSS NOW, THEN. YESTERDAY IT WAS NEVER HERE-- TOMORROW IT MAY NEVER HAVE BEEN HERE AGAIN.
AND LOOK--UP AHEAD, THROUGH THE MISTS...

...DOES YOUR HEART NOT *YEARN* TO KNOW WHAT LURKS BEYOND *THAT?*
THIS SCARY FOREST LITERALLY WASN'T HERE A SECOND AGO.
THOR--I DON'T LIKE THIS AT *ALL*--
DETAILS.
CREEEE
EEEEAK
VERILY.
I LOVE IT.

YES, WHAT'S NOT TO LOVE? FORESTS FROM NOWHERE, GRAVEYARD GATES, TERRIFYING CREAKS--SURELY THIS PORTENDS FUN FOR ALL THE FAMILY.
I'M OFFSKI...
LOKI! SHAME ON YOU.
YOU WOULD DECLINE SUCH A DRAMATIC INVITATION?
I WOULD AND HAVE. THIS WILL NOT END WELL, BROTHER.
THERE'S SUCH A THING AS ONE ADVENTURE TOO MANY--EVEN FOR THOR, LEGENDARY DUNDERHEAD OF THUNDERHEADS--
LOKI...
...THIS IS NO MERE ADVENTURE. THIS IS MYTH.
THERE ARE TIMES WHEN THE SPINNERS OF FATE'S THREAD WEAVE GREAT TALES FOR US.
THIS IS ONE SUCH MOMENT OF TRIAL. SHOULD WE RUN FROM IT...?
YES! RIGHT NOW! IF IT'S MY MOMENT OF TRIAL--TRY ME IN ABSENTIA!
THERE'S NO WAY YOU CAN MAKE ME--
--OW! OW! OW!
AT LEAST SWITCH TO THE OTHER EAR!

SO THROUGH THE GATE WE WENT. BUT WE FOLLOWED YOUR LEAD, THOR--AND ONCE AGAIN, YOU WERE NOT HUMBLE.
THE PATH TWISTED TO AND FRO. THE TREES GREW LARGER AND THE GRASS LONGER WITH EACH STEP, UNTIL WE WERE AS ANTS TO IT.
EVEN THE STARS ABOVE TOOK ON STRANGE NEW CONSTELLATIONS.
YET ALL THE TIME YOU FORGED ON, HEEDLESS OF ALL DANGER--FOR WHAT DANGER COULD TOUCH ODIN'S OWN SON?
AYE--I WAS YOUNG AND FOOLISH.
YET AS I RECALL IT, EVEN TURNING BACK WOULD NOT HAVE AIDED US...
...BECAUSE WE'RE LOST! HOPELESSLY LOST IN AN INSANE MAGIC FOREST!
BUT FORTUNATE ARE WE! UNDER YOUR EXPERT LEADERSHIP, WE'RE GOING TO DIE OF HUNGER LONG BEFORE ANYTHING ELSE KILLS US!
YOU HAVE A POINT, TRICKSTER--THOR ALSO COULD EAT.
LET US SEEK SOME PLACE OF SHELTER...
...AND AT ONCE, I SPOT THE VERY THING.
THIS CAVE WILL KEEP A ROOF OVER OUR HEADS AS WE SEEK OUR SUPPER...
UM, YES. OR--HEAR ME OUT--WE KEEP WALKING.
I'VE SUDDENLY LOST MY APPETITE.

A ROOMY PLACE *INDEED*--LIKE A VAST *HALL*. AND I SPY FIVE GREAT *TUNNELS* LEADING OFF FROM THE ENTRANCE.
IF SOME BEAST SHOULD LIVE *WITHIN* ONE OF THEM, IT MAY BE LARGE ENOUGH TO SATISFY EVEN *YOUR* STOMACH, LOKI.
IF *WE* DON'T SATISFY *IT*. WHAT SORT OF BEAST WOULD LIVE *HERE?*
LOOK AT THE *WALLS*--THEY'RE NOT OF EARTH OR ROCK.
IT'S MORE LIKE...*HIDE*. OR *LEATHER*.
THOR...WE'RE IN A CAVE MADE OF SOMETHING'S *SKIN*.
RRUMMBLE
BOR'S BREATH! THE WHOLE *EARTH* TILTS BENEATH US--
'TIS MORE THAN *THAT*, MISCHIEF-MAKER--
--THE CAVE IS *RISING INTO THE AIR!*

AND SHAKING US *LOOSE* LIKE *LINT FROM A POCKET!*
A MINOR SPELL OF *LEVITATION* SHOULD SAVE US FROM HARM, THOUGH 'TWOULD *PLEASE* ME TO SEE THE ODINSON FALL ON HIS--
LOKI.
BEHOLD.
WELL, WELL. LOOK WHAT CRAWLED INTO MY *GLOVE*.
A PAIR OF *GNATS*.
HELLO, GNATS.
YMIR'S ICY BLOOD.

THOR--I KNOW GIANTS. I WAS BORN TO GIANTS. AND THAT...IS A GIANT-GIANT.
SPEAK UP! I CAN BARELY HEAR THY BUZZ-BUZZING!
WITH GIANT-GIANT EARS, AS WELL.
AHEM...WE WERE MERELY ASKING WHOM WE MAY THANK FOR THE HOSPITALITY, NOBLE ONE.
HRUM. IN TRUTH, I HAVE NOT NEEDED A NAME UNTIL JUST THIS MOMENT, LITTLE ONES.
BUT YOU MAY CALL ME...HA! CALL ME SKRYMIR! AYE, MAKE SKRYMIR MY NAME!
COPY THE COPYCAT! HA HA HA HA!
OH GOOD, HE'S COMPLETELY MAD.
THAT TEARS IT, THOR. I'M GOING HOME, AND NOTHING YOU CAN SAY WILL MAKE ME--
I HAVE FOOD IN MY TRAVELING BAG, GNATS!
A MORSEL FOR ME, BUT A FEAST FOR THEE, I WOULD THINK. AND LET NONE SAY I NEVER FED THE SMALL THINGS OF THE FOREST WHEN THEY HUNGERED.
WILL YOU JOIN ME AWHILE?

TELL HIM TO MAKE WITH THE NOSH. I'M GOING TO EAT YOU IN A MINUTE.
AND YOU'LL BEGIN THE MEAL WITH MY FIST! SILENCE, THOU IMPURE BEING!
WE WOULD BE MOST GLAD OF SUCH AID, GOOD SKRYMIR.
THEN HERE--THE BAG IS ALREADY OPEN, OR NEARLY SO.
ONLY THE LOOSEST KNOT FASTENS IT--AYE, ONE A CHILD COULD UNDO.
AND WHILE YOU FEED, I WILL... AUHHM...RETURN TO SLUMBER A MOMENT MORE, TO READY FOR THE END OF MY JOURNEY HOME.
YOU MAY COME WITH ME, IF YOU WISH. I AM SURE MY KING WOULD BESTOW MANY ROYAL TREASURES UPON SUCH TINY AMBASSADORS...
AND WITH THAT, THE GIANT WENT TO SLEEP--AND YOU AND I WERE LEFT HOLDING THE BAG, SO TO SPEAK.
AND WHAT A BAG IT WAS. THE SMELLS FROM INSIDE... WELL, SCENT IS MEMORY, THOR.
REMEMBER NOW.
FINE MEATS AND CHEESES, CURED FISH, THE SHARP TANG OF PICKLING BRINE...A SMORGASBORD FOR TWO HUNGRY YOUNG GODS.

IF WE COULD OPEN THE BAG.
MADNESS! THE LOOSEST KNOT POSSIBLE, HE SAID!
YET THINE AX CANNOT BITE THE ROPES--AND NO ENCHANTMENT OF MINE WILL UNTANGLE THEM--
ENOUGH WITH THY MAGIC! YOU ONLY MAKE THEM TIGHTER!
THE STRENGTH OF THOR WILL BE ENOUGH--IF I HAVE TO TEAR EACH STRAND--NNGH--OF THIS DEVIL'S BINDING--
--RRRGHH--ASUNDER--HHHNNGHH--IN TURN--
HEL DAMN YOU, ROPE, THOR COMMANDS YOU BREAK!
TRICKERY!
BASE TRICKERY AND MISCHIEF!
IT SHALL NOT STAND, FOUL SKRYMIR. I AM ODINSON, AND I WILL NOT HAVE IT.
UPON THINE HEAD BE IT.

UPON THINE HEAD.
ARE YOU *SURE?*
'TIS AS IT WAS. *THIS* PART OF THE TALE *NEVER CHANGES.*
AYE. I COULD NOT UNDO THE *KNOT*, OR TEAR EVEN A STRAND OF THE *BINDING*.
BUT MY *REACTION* TO THIS FAILURE? A FAILURE OF MY *OWN SINEWS*, MY *OWN WITS?*
WAS TO *BLAME ANOTHER.*
AND HAVING *APPORTIONED* THE BLAME...TO TAKE YOUR GREAT AX, *JARNBJORN*, BLESSED WITH THINE OWN BLOOD...
TO *CLIMB* THE SLEEPING GIANT, WHO ALL EVIDENCE DICTATED HAD DONE YOU *NO WRONG*...
ODIN AND BURI FORGIVE ME.
TO STAND UPON THE VERY TOP OF HIS *HEAD*, AX RAISED...
'TIS A TALE OF WHAT WAS. BUT I SWEAR I AM NOT AS I WAS.
I AM NO LONGER *THIS*.
NOT THIS...

NOT THIS!
...AND TRY-- WITH ALL THY STRENGTH--TO MURDER ONE WHO OFFERED HOSPITALITY.
AS HE SLEPT.
AND THE CHERRY ON TOP, THOR?

AAUUHH-HHRM! WHAT AN UNTROUBLED SLEEP THAT WAS!
EXCEPT... WAS THAT A LEAF I FELT FLUTTER DOWN UPON ME? OR A TEENY-TINY ACORN?
DID THE SMALLEST BIRD PASS BY AND DROP ITS TEENSY-WEENSY BUSINESS ON MY HEAD...?
IT...IT WAS...
...NOTHING AT ALL.
I AM GLAD OF THAT! FOR WE ARE CLOSER TO HOME THAN I DID THINK!
SEE--'TIS VISIBLE THROUGH THE TREES!
BEHOLD...
...UTGARDHALL!
W LEAF I F DOWN UPON A TEENY-TI ACORN?
DID THE SMALLEST BIRD PASS BY AND DROP ITS TEENSY-WEENSY BUSINESS ON MY HEAD...?
HOLD...
...UTGARDHALL!
THE STORY'S CHANGING AS I READ IT.
SKALD-MAGIC, DARIO.
BUT TWO CAN PLAY AT THAT GAME...

THE TELLER OF THE TALE

...AND THE PRIZE IS THE MIGHTY THOR.
THOR
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MARVEL COMICS GROUP
THE MIGHTY THOR

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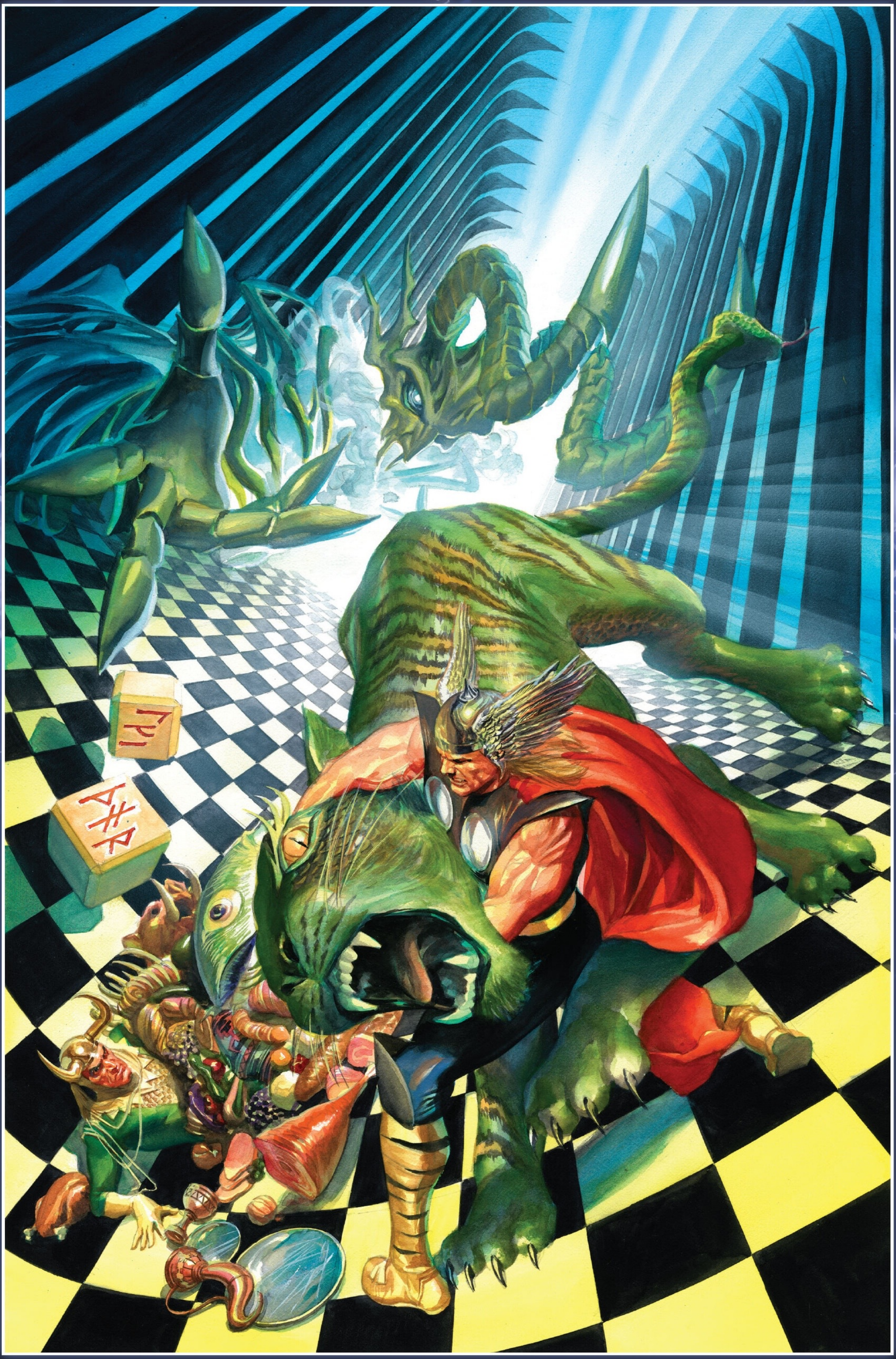


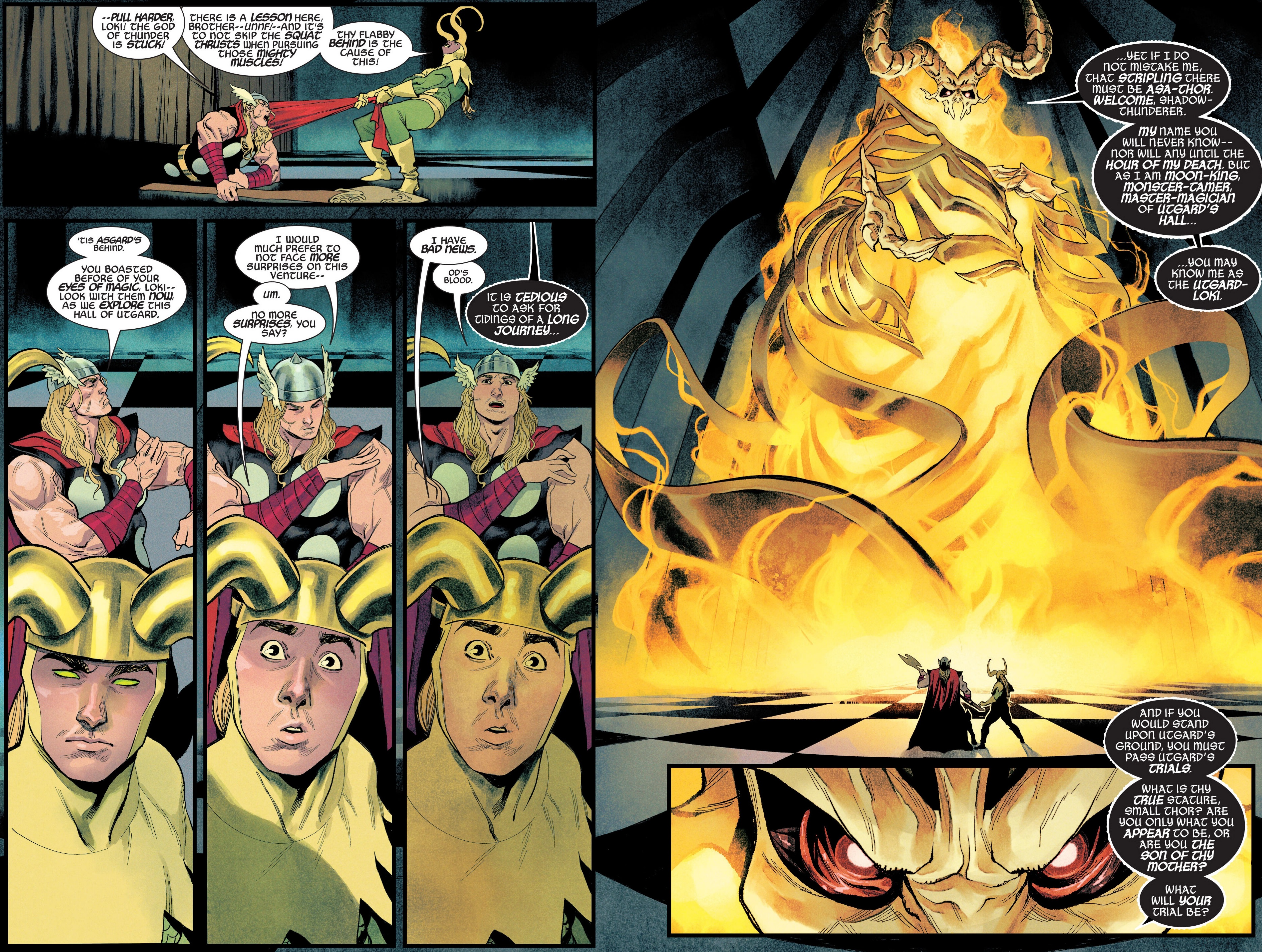
"'That will indeed be a feat,'* SAID UTGARD-LOKI, *'IF THOU PERFORMEST WHAT THOU PROMISEST, AND IT SHALL BE TRIED FORTHWITH.'"

– FROM *THOR'S ADVENTURES ON HIS JOURNEY TO THE LAND OF THE GIANTS*,
THE YOUNGER EDDAS OF SNORRE STURLESON

WOULD YOU KNOW MORE?
AYE. TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED NEXT, SKALD.
A STRANGE FOG DESCENDED UPON US AS WE LEFT THE EDGE OF THE FOREST.
WE COULD HEAR THE HEAVY TREAD OF THE GIANT WHO CALLED HIMSELF SKRYMIR AHEAD OF US--BUT NOTHING OF HIM COULD BE SEEN.
STILL, WE FOLLOWED THE ECHO OF HIM, CLOSING OUR EYES TO HEAR BETTER AS THE SOUND GREW FAINTER AND FARTHER AHEAD...
...AND WHEN THE MISTS CLEARED, I SAID:
THOR!
WHUH!
OPEN YOUR EYES!

WE'RE HERE.
UTGARDHALL.

AND HERE AT THE TOP OF THE UTGARD STEPS ARE THE UTGARD DOORS. BUT EVEN WITH EYES OF MAGIC, I DON'T SEE SKRYMIR OF UTGARD--WHO SAID HE'D WELCOME US THROUGH THEM.
SO--JUST TO RECAP, THOR--WE'RE LOST AND STARVING IN A LAND WE KNOW NOT, AND OUR ONLY GUIDE HAS VANISHED.
THE WISE THING WOULD BE TO TURN AWAY FROM THIS MADNESS AND FIND SOME GRUB--
OW!
ALL COWARDICE IS WISDOM TO THE COWARD.
YET TRUE WISDOM COMES WITH KNOWLEDGE--
WHAPP
--AND THE TRUE SON OF ODIN WOULD KNOW WHAT VAST CHAMBERS LIE BEYOND SUCH VAST DOORS.
MIGHT SUCH A COURSE BRING PAIN AND SACRIFICE? DO NOT DOUBT IT. BUT IF NOTHING ELSE, WE SHOULD BRING WORD OF THIS BACK TO THE ALL-FATHER.
THEN HE MIGHT FINALLY TREAT US AS GODS, AND NOT TROUBLESOME STRIPLINGS--
AH-HA! NOW THE TRUE ODINSON SPEAKS! THY PRIDE IS AT STAKE!
WELL, LET THE FIRST SACRIFICE BE THAT, OH GREAT AND NOBLE THUNDERER! ON THY BELLY MUST THOU GO!
WHAT? WHAT MEAN YOU, MISCHIEF-MAKER?
BEHOLD OUR ENTRANCE.
WHAT? NO! SILENCE, THOU IMPURE BEING!
THE GOD OF THUNDER WILL SMASH THESE DOORS FROM THEIR HINGES BEFORE HE CRAWLS BENEATH THEM LIKE A SCURRYING--


--PULL HARDER, LOKI! THE GOD OF THUNDER IS STUCK!
THERE IS A LESSON HERE, BROTHER--UNNF!--AND IT'S TO NOT SKIP THE SQUAT THRUSTS WHEN PURSUING THOSE MIGHTY MUSCLES!
THY FLABBY BEHIND IS THE CAUSE OF THIS!
'TIS ASGARD'S BEHIND.
YOU BOASTED BEFORE OF YOUR EYES OF MAGIC, LOKI-- LOOK WITH THEM NOW, AS WE EXPLORE THIS HALL OF UTGARD.
I WOULD MUCH PREFER TO NOT FACE MORE SURPRISES ON THIS VENTURE--
UM.
NO MORE SURPRISES, YOU SAY?
I HAVE BAD NEWS.
OD'S BLOOD.
IT IS TEDIOUS TO ASK FOR TIDINGS OF A LONG JOURNEY...
...YET IF I DO NOT MISTAKE ME, THAT STRIPLING THERE MUST BE ASA-THOR. WELCOME, SHADOW-THUNDERER.
MY NAME YOU WILL NEVER KNOW-- NOR WILL ANY UNTIL THE HOUR OF MY DEATH. BUT AS I AM MOON-KING, MONSTER-TAMER, MASTER-MAGICIAN OF UTGARD'S HALL...
...YOU MAY KNOW ME AS THE UTGARD-LOKI.
AND IF YOU WOULD STAND UPON UTGARD'S GROUND, YOU MUST PASS UTGARD'S TRIALS.
WHAT IS THY TRUE STATURE, SMALL THOR? ARE YOU ONLY WHAT YOU APPEAR TO BE, OR ARE YOU THE SON OF THY MOTHER?
WHAT WILL YOUR TRIAL BE?

I GREET YOU IN GOOD FAITH, UTGARD-LOKI.
BUT MASTER OF THIS HALL THOUGH YOU MAY BE--THE SONS OF ODIN DO NOT ENGAGE IN PETTY--
EATING CONTEST.
WHAT--?
WHO CAN EAT THE BIGGEST BREAKFAST FASTEST. WHATEVER HAPPENS, MY STOMACH'S THE BIG WINNER.
LOKI--THIS IS A SERIOUS MATTER--
IT IS A MOST SERIOUS MATTER. FOR ALL TRIALS HERE ARE ONE TRIAL--AND YOU HAVE COME AS REPRESENTATIVES OF YOUR REALM.
IF YOU CANNOT ENDURE...IF YOU ARE UNWORTHY OF SURVIVAL...WHAT CAN BE SAID OF ASGARD? OR FAR JOTUNHEIM?
OR MIDGARD?
I--I HAVE BARELY SET FOOT IN THE MIDGARD-REALM--
YET YOU RISE TO DEFEND IT SO QUICKLY. WHY IS THAT? DO YOU KNOW YET, SMALL THOR?
EITHER WAY, THE TERMS ARE SET... AND THEY WILL DECIDE THE FATE OF WORLDS.
...
BETTER MAKE IT A DRINKING CONTEST TOO.

LOKI! LEARN SILENCE!
OWW!
IT WAS ONLY A JOKE--
AND YET THERE IS GREAT TRUTH TO BE FOUND IN JESTS.
WILL THOR STAND IDLE AS HIS KIN COMPETES FOR THE LIFE OF ALL HE HOLDS DEAR?
THAT DOES NOT SOUND LIKE THE THOR THE LEGENDS SPEAK OF--OR EVEN THE THOR WHO STANDS HERE NOW.
SO, LOKI SHALL EAT...
...AND THOR SHALL DRINK. THAT SEEMS FAIR.
OD'S BLOOD--
IF YOU WANT THE NAME LOKI, YOU'LL NEED MORE SUBTLE LIES.
A FAIR CONTEST? AGAINST GIANTS WITH GIANT BELLIES?
YOU'LL EXCUSE ME IF I DON'T WAIT FOR THE STARTER'S WHISTLE...
THOR FACES ONLY THE MEAD-HORN--HE WINS BY DRAINING IT DRY. AS FOR THEE...

...HERE IS YOUR OPPONENT, LITTLE TRICKSTER.
LOGI HIS NAME.
IS HE HERE TO PUT ME OFF MY FOOD? HE'S GIVING ME THE CREEPS.
DOES HE TALK?
SOMETIMES HE SPITS.
STILL--AN EASIER OPPONENT THAN WE FEARED, LOKI.
PERHAPS THESE TRIALS WE FACE ARE MERELY--GLUPP--CEREMONIAL--
PFAHH!
WHAT IS THIS? THE MEAD IS FOUL! HARSH AND BITTER!
YOU EXPECTED THY MOTHER'S MILK, BOY? WE TAKE A STERNER DRAUGHT IN THESE PARTS.
NEVERTHELESS--IT MUST BE DRAINED.
HA! DRINK UP, THOR--ASGARD'S AT STAKE, REMEMBER.
IF IT HELPS YOUR RESOLVE, THE MEAD IN THIS CUP GOES DOWN LIKE--

--A DREAM.
...
PERHAPS I'VE HAD ENOUGH.
YOU **HAVE**, LITTLE LIE-SMITH? **LOGI** HAS NOT, AND **NEVER WILL**--UNTIL THE **LAST STAR** GOES OUT.
AND **YOU**, THOR--I MYSELF DID **DRAIN** THIS CUP IN **THREE LONG SWALLOWS** AT THE **FORMATION OF THE WORLD!** WILL YOU DO **LESS?**
HURRRP-- SO MUCH--
--SO MUCH STILL **LEFT**--
AYE, NEAR THE **FULL AMOUNT**. VERY DISAPPOINTING.
WHEN ASGARD IS RAZED TO THE **BARREN ROCK**, WILL YOU TELL YOUR **MOTHER** OF THIS FAILURE...?
N-**NAY**. FOR I HAVE NOT YET **FAILED**.
ALL TRIALS ARE **ONE TRIAL**, YOU SAID--AND THE TEST IS TO **ENDURE**--
--SO BRING YOUR NEXT TRIAL **ON**, LORD OF UTGARD.
THOR ENDURES.

HURRAP-- SO MUCH--
--SO MUCH STILL LEFT--
--SO BRING YOUR NEXT TRIAL ON, LORD OF UTGARD.
THOR ENDURES.
"THOR ENDURES."
WE'LL SEE, THUNDER GOD.
YOU KNOW...ACQUIRING THIS PUBLISHER WAS A PROPAGANDA EXERCISE. CONTROL THE NARRATIVE, MONETIZE ENEMIES, DAMAGE THEIR BRANDS... AND IF THEY TAKE THE OBVIOUS BAIT, ALL THE BETTER.
BUT THIS MAGICAL ELEMENT YOU'VE ADDED... IT'S PROVING VERY USEFUL, AMORA.
FOOM
THOR
YOU'RE TOO KIND. WHAT YOU'RE HOLDING ISN'T MUCH MORE THAN A SCRYING WINDOW, REALLY.
AYE. MAGICALLY, IT'S A TOY.
A TOY FOR THE AMUSEMENT OF A CHILD WHO COLLECTS SHINY COINS...
SKURGE! BE NICE.
DEAR DARIO'S WORKED SO HARD ON THE MAIN INGREDIENT FOR THE REAL MAGIC, AFTER ALL.
TAP TAP
AND WHEN THAT ARRIVES... WELL, THEN WE ALL GET WHAT WE WANT, DON'T WE?
NOW, SHALL WE SEE WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?
FOOM
MARVEL COMICS GROUP
THOR

"I THINK WE WERE GETTING TO A GOOD BIT."
DID YOU HEAR SOMETHING?
NOT I.
NOW, AS I RECALL...DID THE UTGARD-KING PROPOSE A FOOTRACE FOR THE NEXT CHALLENGE...?
FOR LOKI IS SURELY THE GREATEST IN ALL THE REALMS AT RUNNING AWAY...
HILARIOUS, BROTHER.
BUT I'M THE ONE WITH THE SEVEN-LEAGUE BOOTS--AND I'VE HEARD NO RULE AGAINST USING THEM--
--WHILE MY CHOSEN OPPONENT DOESN'T EVEN HAVE SHOES.
HUGI? WAS THAT YOUR NAME?
NOT QUITE.
CALL ME... LUKKI.
I'LL SEE YOU SOON...
...ONCE YOU'VE CAUGHT UP WITH ME.
WHOOOSHH

AND WITH THAT, LUKKI WAS GONE, FASTER THAN AN EYEBLINK. I HAD LOST THE RACE BEFORE I COULD TWITCH... BUT...
BUT LUKKI'S NEW. IT WAS HUGI BEFORE.
MAGIC CAN TURN BACK UPON THE CASTER, AND TALES BACK UPON THE TELLER...ESPECIALLY IF ANOTHER DRAWS POWER FROM THE SAME FIRE...
BUT WE MUST SEE THE MYTH TO ITS END.
YOUR BLOOD WAS UP, THOR--AND SO YOU DEMANDED TO WRESTLE AND PROVE YOUR STRENGTH.
AND THUS, UTGARD-LOKI CALLED FORTH...
...MY ANCIENT NURSE, ELLI!
COME, ASA-THOR, AND VANQUISH HER! WHAT IS THE MATTER? CAN YOU NOT BREAK THE GRIP OF SUCH A FEEBLE CRONE...?
DO NOT HOLD BACK FROM PITY, PRINCE OF ASGARD! THE TRIAL IS LOST UNLESS YOU FORCE HER TO YIELD...

...OR WILL YOU YIELD YOURSELF? WILL YOU BOW, GOD OF THUNDER...?
N-NEVER...
...NEVER GIVE UP...
...
ENOUGH, THEN. SET HIM LOOSE, ELLI.
HE CANNOT TRULY YIELD IF HE IS DEAD.
I WILL NOT YIELD EVER, LORD OF UTGARD. IT IS NOT IN ME.
NOT...NOT WITH ALL AT STAKE.
NO? THEN, WITH ALL AT STAKE-- A FINAL TRIAL, THUNDERER.
A TRIAL TO DECIDE THE GAME ONCE AND FOR ALL.
LIFT THAT CAT.

YOU MOCK ME.
...YOU SAID.
BUT IN YOUR HEART, YOU DID NOT BELIEVE IT.
AND AS YOU PLACED YOUR HAND BENEATH THE CAT'S BELLY...
GAH!
HSSSSSSS.

SQUIRM AS YOU LIKE, BIZARRE BEAST--THOR--WILL DEFEAT THEE--
SSSSSS
AND AS ONE SINGLE PAW CAME OFF THE FLOOR...
...THE ILLUSION FELL AWAY AT LAST.
BY MUSPELHEIM'S FIRE AND YMIR'S ICE!

ALL ILLUSIONS FELL AWAY.
SKRYMIR THE GIANT WAS UTGARD-LOKI FROM THE START--
--FOR HE WAS NOT MASTER-MAGICIAN BUT THE DEEP MAGIC ITSELF.
THE KNOT ON HIS BAG WAS THE THREAD OF ETERNITY'S OWN FATE, THAT WHICH IS NOT FOR ANY TO SUNDER.
WHEN YOU BROUGHT DOWN JARNBJORN ON HIS HEAD, UTGARD-LOKI HAD PLACED A MOUNTAIN IN THE WAY--AND THAT PEAK WAS NOW A VALLEY.
TO PLAY LOGI'S ROLE, THE UTGARD-MAGE HAD ENLISTED FIRE ITSELF, ALL-CONSUMING AND ALL-DEVOURING--
--WHILE MISCHIEVOUS LUKKI WAS MY OWN THOUGHT, WHICH RACED AHEAD OF EACH ACTION.
THE HORN YOU DRANK FROM WAS THE SEA, LEFT AT LOW TIDE BY YOUR EFFORTS...
...THE CRONE WAS DEATH, TO WHOM EVEN GODS MUST BOW...

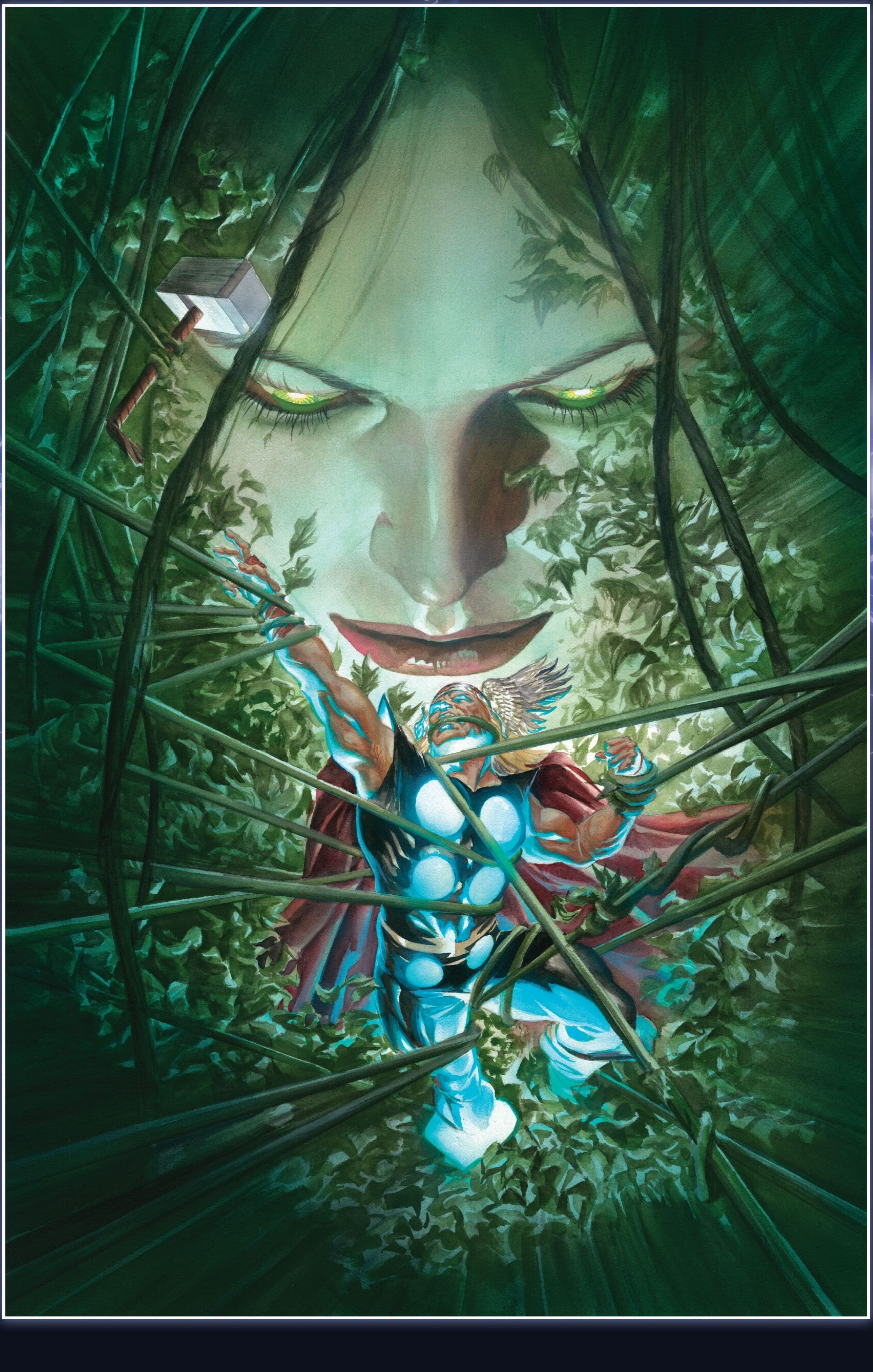
...AND THE CAT WAS JORMUNGANDR-- THE MIDGARD SERPENT THAT ENCIRCLES THE EARTH.
WHO WAS ONCE THE FORETOLD END TO THE STORY OF THOR.
YET EVEN AT THE END-- I WILL NOT YIELD! DO YOU HEAR ME, UTGARD-LOKI?
THOR-- WILL NEVER-- YIELD!
NO, NO, YOU WON'T, WILL YOU?
IT SEEMS THY GODLY RACE IS WORTHY TO RULE THE COSMOS, SON OF THY MOTHER...AT LEAST FOR THE PRESENT AGE.
YET BEWARE. IN A FUTURE AGE, THE WHEEL MAY TURN. AND SHOULD THE GATE TO UTGARD BE UNLATCHED AGAIN...
...ALL WILL FALL TO CATASTROPHE.

AND NOW THAT WE **UNDERSTAND** EACH OTHER, ASA-THOR--LET THE **FINAL REMAINING MAGIC** BE DISPELLED--
--THE ENCHANTMENT THAT IS **UTGARDHALL ITSELF!**
AND THEN UTGARDHALL **MELTED AWAY** INTO NAUGHT BUT **SMOKE...**
...AND WHEN THAT SMOKE **CLEARED**, AFTER A MOMENT, OR AN HOUR, OR A YEAR...
...WE WERE AGAIN IN **ASGARD.**
SO WE WENT HOME.
THE END.
"THE END."
AS SIMPLE AS **THAT?**

IT'S HOW EVERY TALE MUST END, THOR.
I AM ONLY THE TELLER. I CANNOT FIND MEANING IN THE TALE FOR YOU-- NOR WOULD I IF I COULD.
AYE. 'TIS NOT YOUR ROLE TO CODDLE ME-- SO YOU HAVE SAID.
AND YET, THERE IS MEANING TO BE FOUND.
AS TORANOS IS TO ME, UTGARD-LOKI IS TO YOU.
AN ELDER TRICKSTER--WHO MOVES MOUNTAINS AND OCEANS AND BENDS DEATH TO HIS WILL, ALL FOR THE TRICK. AND I CAN DEFEAT TRICKSTERS...
...BUT HE WAS THE ONLY UTGARD-GOD WE MET ON THAT JOURNEY--HIM OR HIS FALSE FACE, SKRYMIR.
I CAN DELAY THE PAINFUL TASK NO LONGER. I MUST KNOW WHY GAEA WOULD LOOSE SUCH A BEING ON US--AND UPON HERSELF.
YET BURIED IN THAT QUESTION IS A DEEPER ONE, THAT I FEAR THE ANSWER TO.
THERE IS AN UTGARD-LOKI. THERE IS AN UTGARD-THOR. ARE THERE MORE?
SOMEWHERE... IN THAT FOREST, BEYOND THAT GATE...

"...IS THERE AN UTGARD-ODIN?"
ALL TRIALS ARE ONE

8



“HA! HOW THE MURMUR DEEPENS! I PERCEIVE
AND TREMBLE AT ITS DREADFUL IMPORT. EARTH
UPLIFTS A GENERAL CRY FOR GUILT AND WRONG,
AND HEAVEN IS LISTENING.”

- “EARTH,” WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

On the coast of Norway, there is a cave.
It is as old as the glaciers, as old as the forming of the Earth. It was here before people-- and here, people die.
Boats are wrecked. Swimmers are dragged under by the current. Those who enter never return, their bodies never found.
If you do not approach this place with respect, it will kill you.
Here, the Earth does not have mercy.
Here, the Earth is cruel.

Thor came to this place seeking truth.
And though he came in full knowledge that such truth would not be easy heard...
...there was still a moment when the chill of the air gripped his heart.
For what boy does not fear his mother's wrath?
Yet Thor was no longer a child. He was All-Father of the Aesir now. And he was Midgard's Avenger.
And to the Odinson, these were not mere titles, to be adorned with like an ermine cloak.
They were vows.
Thor had sworn an oath upon his own name...to protect both Gods and mortals...
...even in the maw of death itself.

AND THIS CATHEDRAL OF STONE IS INDEED DEATH'S HALL--FOR NO MORTAL HAS SEEN IT AND LIVED...NOT SINCE THE GODS WERE YOUNG.
BUT BEFORE HUMANITY HAD WORDS UPON THEIR TONGUES, THEY HUDDLED BY FIRELIGHT HERE...
...AND DAUBED THEIR HISTORIES.
TALES OF NATURE'S GREAT BOUNTY...
...AND WHAT COMES WHEN SUCH BOUNTY IS TAKEN FOR GRANTED.
NATURE IS EASILY BETRAYED...
...AND EASILY BETRAYS.
MOTHER! SHOW YOURSELF!
YOUR SON STANDS IN YOUR PLACE OF POWER--AND THOR WOULD SPEAK TO THEE!
And as Thor cried out...
KRRRRRK
...his mother answered.

'Twas natural to **hesitate**. Thor was **God of Thunder**--a God of the **sky**, of the **clean air**.
Such a being is not at **home** when asked to voyage **deeper and deeper into the Earth**...
...yet the truth he sought was not found **above**.
So he pressed **on**--as the passage wound **deeper**, the rock **narrower**...
...until he reached the **end** of the journey...
...and beheld **Gaea**.
Yet this was not the Gaea he knew.
SO.
SPEAK.

I SEE YOU ARE BUSY, MOTHER. SO I WILL NOT KEEP YOU LONG.
FOR THE QUESTION I HAVE IS A SIMPLE ONE.
WHY?
TORANOS--ELDER GOD OF THUNDER--WAS LOOSED ON MIDGARD. MORTALS DIED, WHOSE LIVES I HAD SWORN TO PROTECT.
AND HAD I NOT FOUGHT HIM--HAD I NOT SENT HIM FAR FROM EARTH--ALL THERE MIGHT HAVE DIED BEFORE I FOUND THE ANSWER TO HIS ANCIENT RAGE...
...INCLUDING YOU.
THE FOE CALLED HIMSELF THE THOR OF UTGARD--AND SO I BADE MY SKALD REMIND ME OF THAT REALM AND OF THE TRIALS I UNDERTOOK THERE IN MY YOUTH.
I WISHED TO REMEMBER CLEARLY WHAT I DID TO KEEP SEALED THAT REALM THAT IS NO REALM...AND WHY I DID SO.

FOR SHOULD THAT DOOR BETWEEN REALM AND UNREALM EVER BE *UNLATCHED*, IT WOULD CAUSE *ALL THAT IS*--INCLUDING *YOU*--TO FALL TO *CATASTROPHE*.
SO I WAS TOLD BY THE UTGARD-LOKI *HIMSELF*--AND THOUGH HE WAS *FIRST AMONG TRICKSTERS*, I FELT THE *TRUTH* OF IT.
AND?
HAS THIS JOURNEY A *DESTINATION?*
YOU WELL KNOW IT.
AS TORANOS FLED, *DEFEATED*, BACK TO WHENCE HE HAD *COME*...HE SPOKE A *NAME* TO ME.
THE NAME OF SHE WHO HAD *UNSEALED THE GATE*.
WHO HAD GIVEN HIM THE *FREEDOM* TO WREAK ALL HIS *HAVOC*.
AND IT WAS YOUR NAME, MOTHER.
SO I ASK *AGAIN*.
TELL ME WHY.
And in Thor's voice was the **passion of the storm...**

...yet in his mother's was the harshness of the living rock.
A FAIR QUESTION. AND I WILL ANSWER.
GLAD I AM TO HEAR IT--
BUT FIRST... I HAVE A QUESTION OF MY OWN.
Upon which storms break.
TELL ME, SMALL GOD.
WHO ARE YOU?
WHO ARE YOU TO KNOW MY REASONS?
WHO--?
I AM THE CHAMPION OF MIDGARD, THE REALM YOU ENDANGERED! I AM THE AVENGER OF THOSE YOU HAVE WRONGED!
I AM YOUR CHILD!
HRH.
I HAVE MANY CHILDREN...

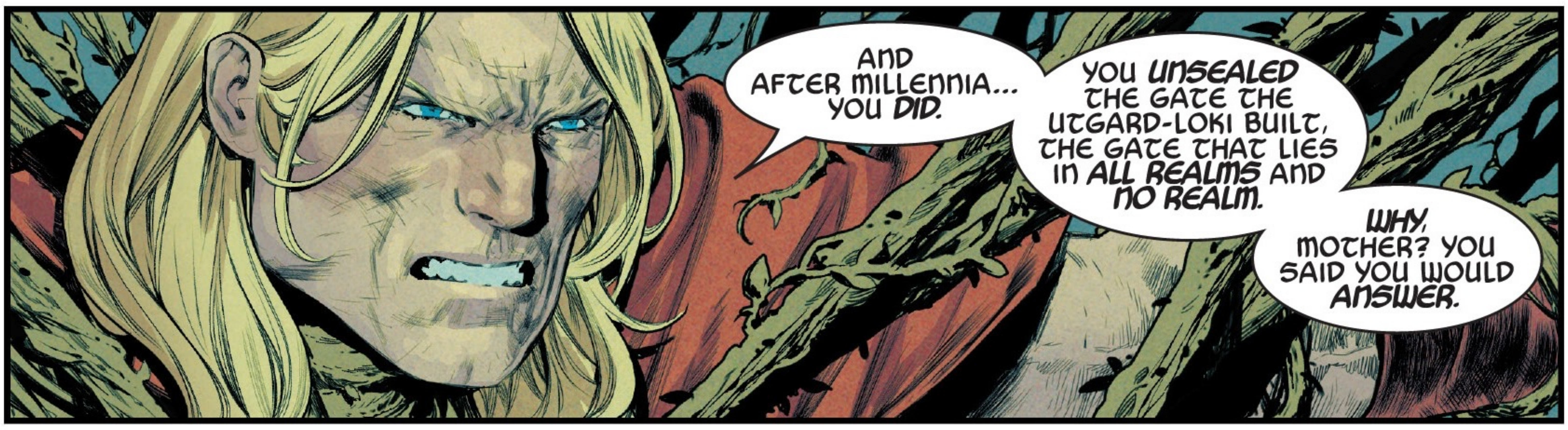
...AND YOU ARE LEAST AMONG THEM.
WHAT--?
MIGHTY AVENGER.
CHAMPION OF THE EARTH.
AAKK--
WHERE WERE YOU WHEN THE EARTH WAS FORMED?
WHEN THE DEMIURGE CAST HIS GAZE UPON THE DARK OF THE DEEP AND BROUGHT FORTH TITANS?
TORANOS WAS THERE. CHTHON AND SET AND TIWAZ WERE THERE. HE YOU CALL UTGARD-LOKI--HE WHOSE NAME WE CANNOT KNOW OR SPEAK--WAS THERE.
AND I WAS THERE, AS THE ANCIENT GODS MADE WAR...
...FOR I WAS THERE TO WIN THAT WAR.

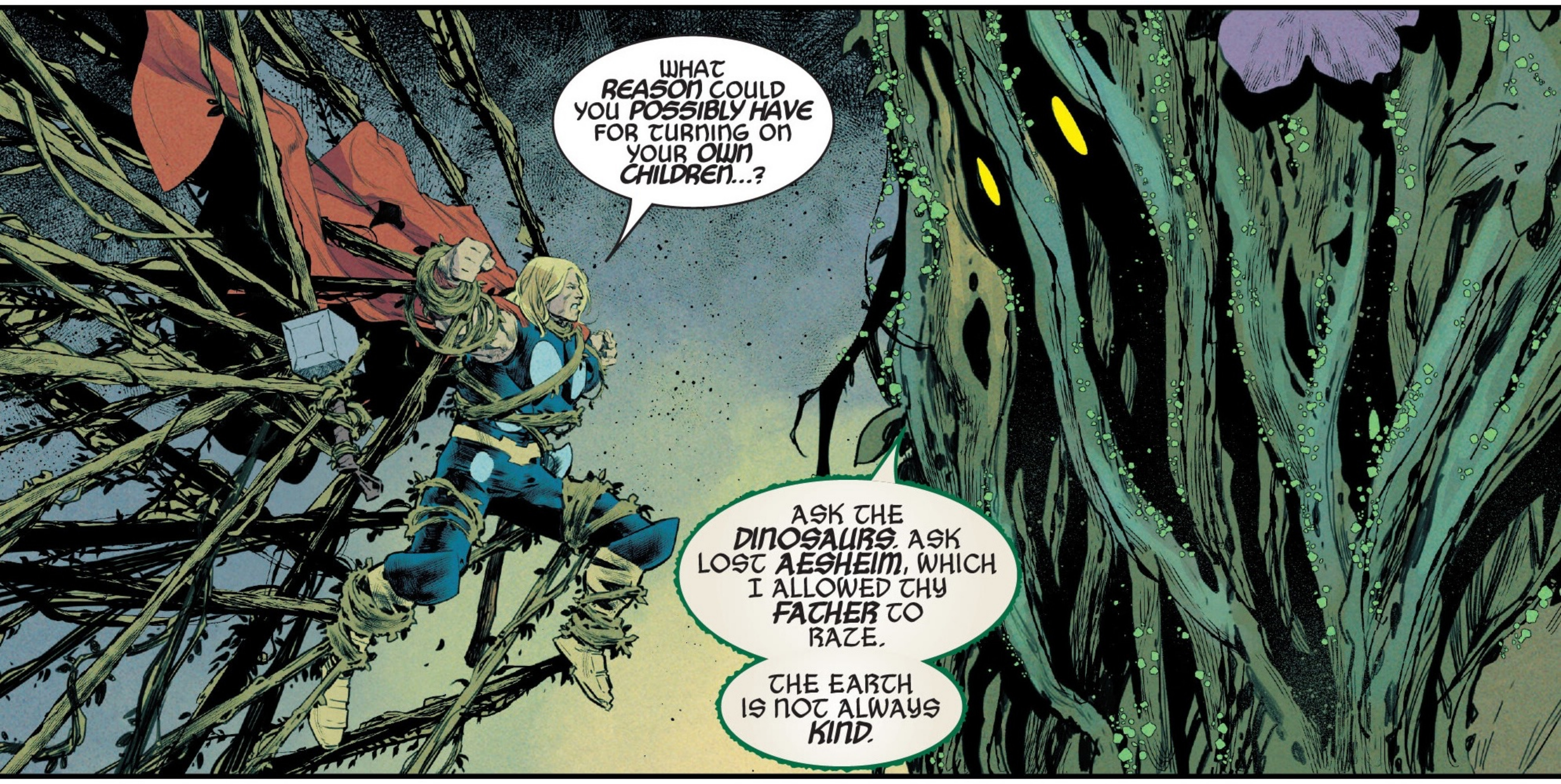
"THE ELDERS BATTLED ENDLESSLY--MONSTROSITIES OF MYTH, ENEMIES BY THEIR NATURE, EACH SEEKING TO CLAIM WHATEVER THEIR KINFOLK POSSESSED.
"CARING NOT FOR THE GROUND UNDER THEIR FEET--THE GOOD EARTH THEY SACRIFICED THOUGHTLESSLY TO MAINTAIN A WORLD OF CONSTANT STRIFE.
"CARING NOT FOR THE LIFE THAT STRUGGLED TO BE BORN UPON IT.
NOT EVEN MY HARDIEST CREATIONS SURVIVE THE STAGNANT CHURN OF THE GODWAR.
YET I AM LIFE... I AM LIFE, AND I WOULD SEED AND SPREAD AND PROPAGATE. CREATED, I WOULD CREATE, AND NURTURE CREATION.
AND IN THIS, I ALONE OF ALL HERE HAVE COMMON CAUSE WITH THEE...
...O DEMIURGE.
UNKNOWABLE ONE, WHO PLANTED THE SEEDS OF GODS IN THE EARTH.
I AM THE EARTH--AND I AM READY FOR THE NEW SEED.
FOR I HAVE A VISION OF LIFE THAT SPRINGS AND CHANGES AND GROWS FROM LIFE, NOT FROM THE DECREES OF ALMIGHTY POWERS...

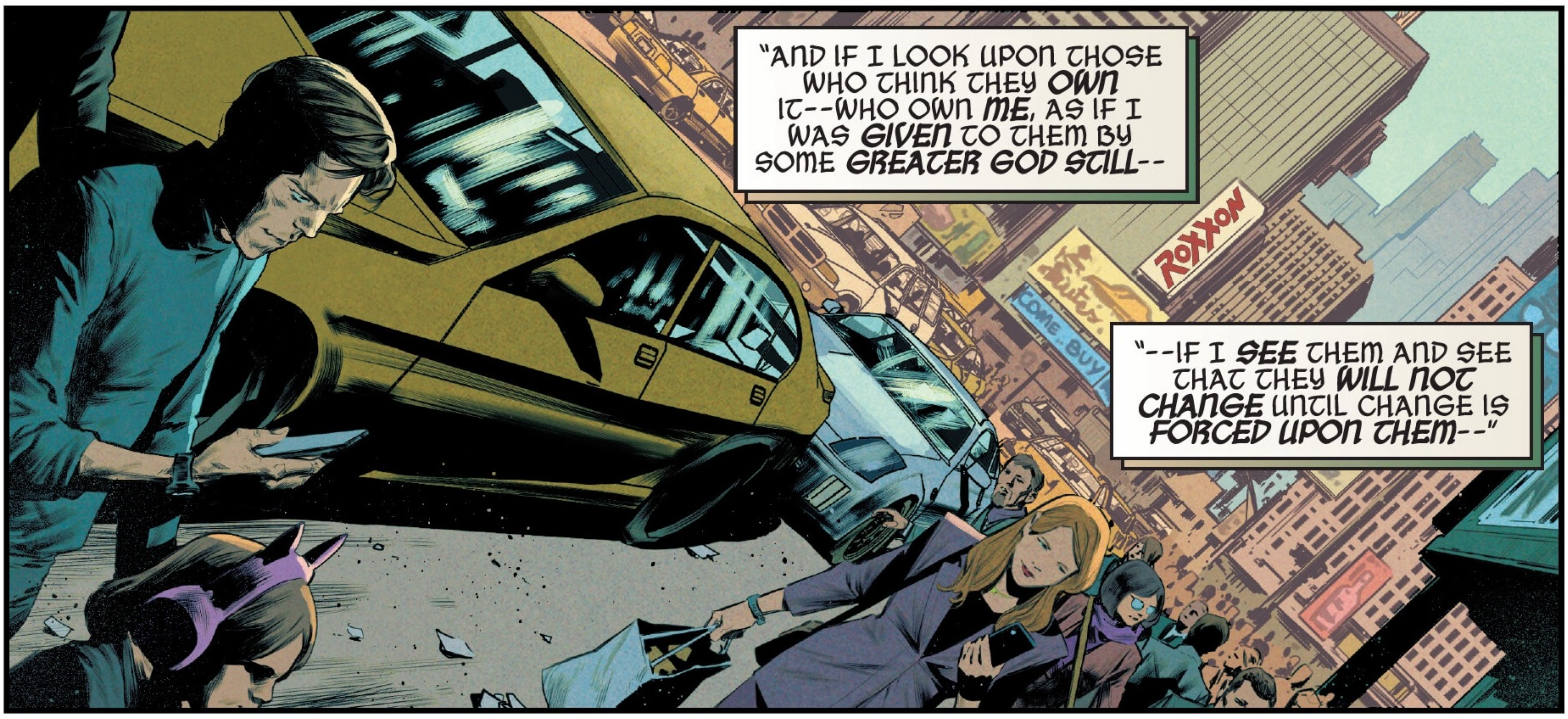
FIRST AMONG SKY-FATHERS!
COLD GAZE THAT BROUGHT US FORTH AND DOOMED THE WORLD TO US!
BESTOW UPON ME THY POWER OF CREATION! THAT I MIGHT GIFT THIS WORLD WITH PROGENY IMMACULATE--
--AND SAVE IT FROM--
"THERE ARE THINGS OF WHICH I WILL NOT SPEAK--FOR THEY CANNOT BE CONTAINED IN WORDS.
"FOR WHENEVER LIFE COMES TOGETHER TO MAKE NEW LIFE, THAT IS MERELY THE PLAY OF SHADOWS...AND THIS WAS THE LIGHT.
"THE DEMIURGE DID AS HE WAS BID. THE NEW SEED WAS PLANTED."
A SEED OF A NEW GOD, WHO CREATED HIMSELF IN ME.
I HELD THE LIGHT LIKE AN EMBER UNTIL I FOUND MY WAY TO THE DEEP PLACES--PERHAPS TO THIS VERY PLACE.
AND THERE DID I GIVE BIRTH, THOR...

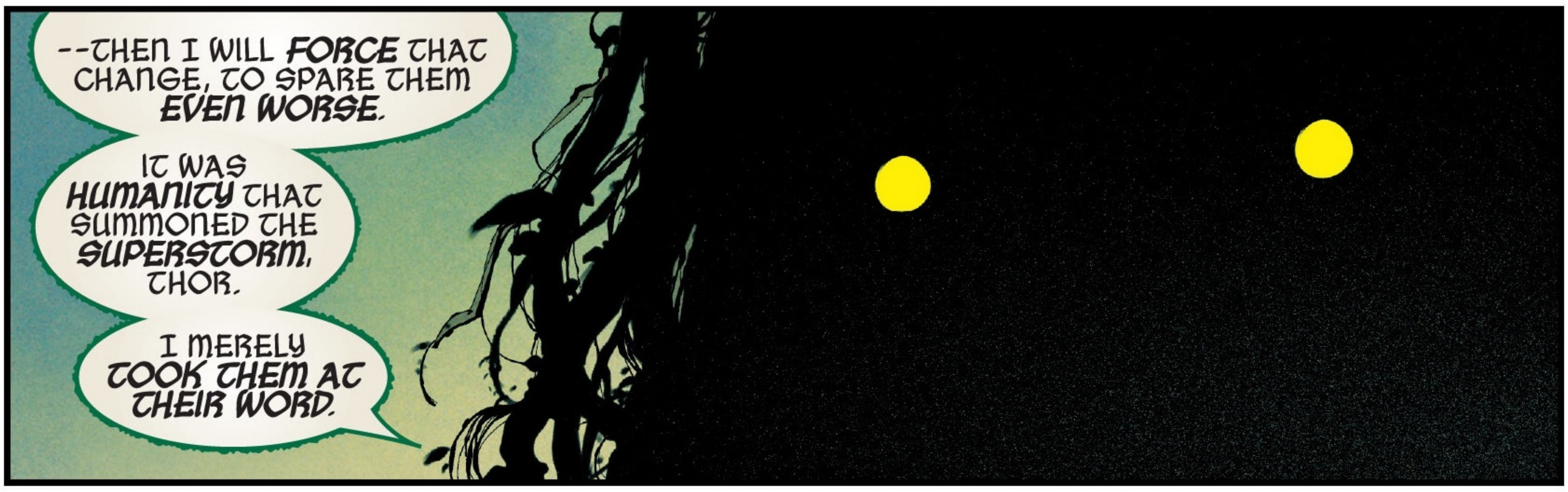
"...TO THY ELDEST BROTHER.
"ATUM WAS HIS NAME, FIRST OF THE GODS--AND THE FIRST OF THE GODS WAS A MAN OF FIRE.
"THE SUN HE WAS, AND GOD OF THE SUN--
"--AND HE BURNED AWAY ALL THAT WAS NOT NEEDED ON THE EARTH--THE ELDER GODS FIRST OF ALL.
"THOSE ANCIENT ONES SHRIEKED CURSES AS HE TORE THEM FROM EXISTENCE, TAKING ALL ESSENCE OF THEM INTO HIMSELF, LEST ANY SCRAP REMAINED TO BE REBORN...
"...AND IN SO DOING, HE SHOWED HIS OTHER FACE--THE SHIFTING FACE THAT TURNS UPON THE WORLD WHEN ATUM'S TURNS AWAY.
"THE NIGHT-SIDE, WHEN THE SUN HAS SET. THE EMPTY SHELL THAT HOWLS THROUGH MANY MOUTHS.
"DEMOGORGE."
AYE. I'VE--NNH--FACED YOUR FIRST SON MANY TIMES...
YOU'VE FACED THE DEMOGORGE.
YOU HAVE NEVER FOUGHT ATUM.
HEED MY WORDS, THOR.
DO NOT.

IF YOU SAY SO, MOTHER.
THE--RRH--THE ELDER GODS SURVIVED HIM...
A SCANT FEW.
CHTHON AND SET CREATED NETHER-PLANES TO ESCAPE TO. OSHTUR AND TIWAT WANDERED, SIRING THEIR OWN CHILDREN.
"AND THEN...THERE WAS THE-ONE-WHO-CANNOT-BE-NAMED."
YOU ALSO FORM YOUR OWN DOMAIN, UNNAMABLE ONE?
MY OUT-LAND, YES.
FAR FROM YOUR MONSTROUS SON AND HIS MONSTROUS GULLET.
TIWAT SENT HIS SERVANT WITH A RUMOR IN ITS BEAK--THAT TORANOS WILL TRAVEL WITH YOU.
HA! DON'T SAY YOU'RE SURPRISED, SISTER. THERE'S COMMON GROUND IN BEING HUNTED BY A RAVENOUS GOD-KILLER.
AND WHY JUST ONE TO A PLANE? THERE'S STRENGTH IN NUMBERS.
KEMUR WILL BE WITH US, AND HOODED MEJED... AND THE BLOOD-HANDED NRGL, OF COURSE.
WE MAY BUILD A TEMPLE OUT THERE. A PANTHEON.
A GREAT HALL, OUT IN THE UT-GARD.
NOW THE GATE IS BUILT--AND FOR YOU, SISTER...THE KEY.
IN CASE YOU EVER WISH TO UNLOCK IT.


AND AFTER MILLENNIA... YOU DID.
YOU UNSEALED THE GATE THE UTGARD-LOKI BUILT, THE GATE THAT LIES IN ALL REALMS AND NO REALM.
WHY, MOTHER? YOU SAID YOU WOULD ANSWER.


WHAT REASON COULD YOU POSSIBLY HAVE FOR TURNING ON YOUR OWN CHILDREN...?
ASK THE DINOSAURS. ASK LOST AESHEIM, WHICH I ALLOWED THY FATHER TO RAZE.
THE EARTH IS NOT ALWAYS KIND.


"AND IF I LOOK UPON THOSE WHO THINK THEY OWN IT--WHO OWN ME, AS IF I WAS GIVEN TO THEM BY SOME GREATER GOD STILL--
ROXXON
COME...BUY
"--IF I SEE THEM AND SEE THAT THEY WILL NOT CHANGE UNTIL CHANGE IS FORCED UPON THEM--"


--THEN I WILL FORCE THAT CHANGE, TO SPARE THEM EVEN WORSE.
IT WAS HUMANITY THAT SUMMONED THE SUPERSTORM, THOR.
I MERELY TOOK THEM AT THEIR WORD.

SO THIS IS YOUR *JUSTICE*, THEN?
TO SAVE THE MORTALS FROM *THEMSELVES*, YOU MUST *KILL THEM BY THE THOUSANDS*-- IS THAT *CORRECT?*
I HAVE HEARD SUCH COLD RATIONALES *BEFORE*, MOTHER.
I DID NOT ACCEPT THEM *THEN*...
...AND I WILL NOT NOW!
YOU *REBEL* AGAINST MY JUDGMENT, CHILD?
I *DO*--FOR IT IS *JUDGMENT WITHOUT MERCY!*
IF THE MORTALS HAVE A CHANCE TO *CHANGE* THEIR FATES, THEY *MUST* BE ALLOWED TO *TRY*--AND I WILL DEFEND THEIR RIGHT TO *DO* SO--
--EVEN AGAINST THE EARTH ITSELF!

THOOM
BUT YOU CANNOT FIGHT THE EARTH ITSELF, THOR.
AND YOU ARE WRONG. THERE IS MERCY IN MY JUDGMENT.
LONG BEFORE ANY OF THIS...WHEN I FIRST SAW THE ROAD HUMANITY WOULD WALK... I GAVE THEM ONE HOPE.
I GAVE THEM YOU, THOR.
YOU ARE MY MERCY.
BUT I WILL NOT SEAL THE GATE AGAIN ON YOUR ENTREATY.
THY DEFEAT OF TORANOS BOUGHT TIME--BUT THE TIME FOR MIDGARD GROWS SHORT.
IF YOU HAVE A MORE PRECISE JUDGMENT TO APPLY AGAINST THOSE WHO WOULD END THE EARTH...

"...I SUGGEST YOU HURRY."
WELCOME TO ROXXON HEADQUARTERS, SIR.
MAY I SEE SOME IDENTIFICATION...?
ROXXON
ROXXON
CLONK
...RIGHT.
AND THE NATURE OF YOUR BUSINESS HERE?
THE ONE WHO RULES ROXXON. THE MINOTAUR.
HIS GREED AND EVIL HATH BEDEVILED MYSELF AND MY MOTHER FOR MANY YEARS. I WOULD SPEAK ON THAT WITH HIM.
I'M SORRY, SIR. THAT WILL ABSOLUTELY NOT BE POSSIBLE.
ROXXON
MM. I TAKE IT THAT ELEVATOR LEADS TO HIS OFFICE?
IT'S A SECURE ELEVATOR, SIR.
I CANNOT STRESS ENOUGH THAT MR. AGGER DOES NOT TAKE MEETINGS WITHOUT A PRIOR APPOINTMENT--
THEN HE WILL SEE ME.
FOR I HAVE HAD AN APPOINTMENT FOR A MEETING WITH DARIO AGGER FOR SOME CONSIDERABLE TIME.

AND IT WILL BE OUR *FINAL* MEETING.

THE LAST JUDGMENT

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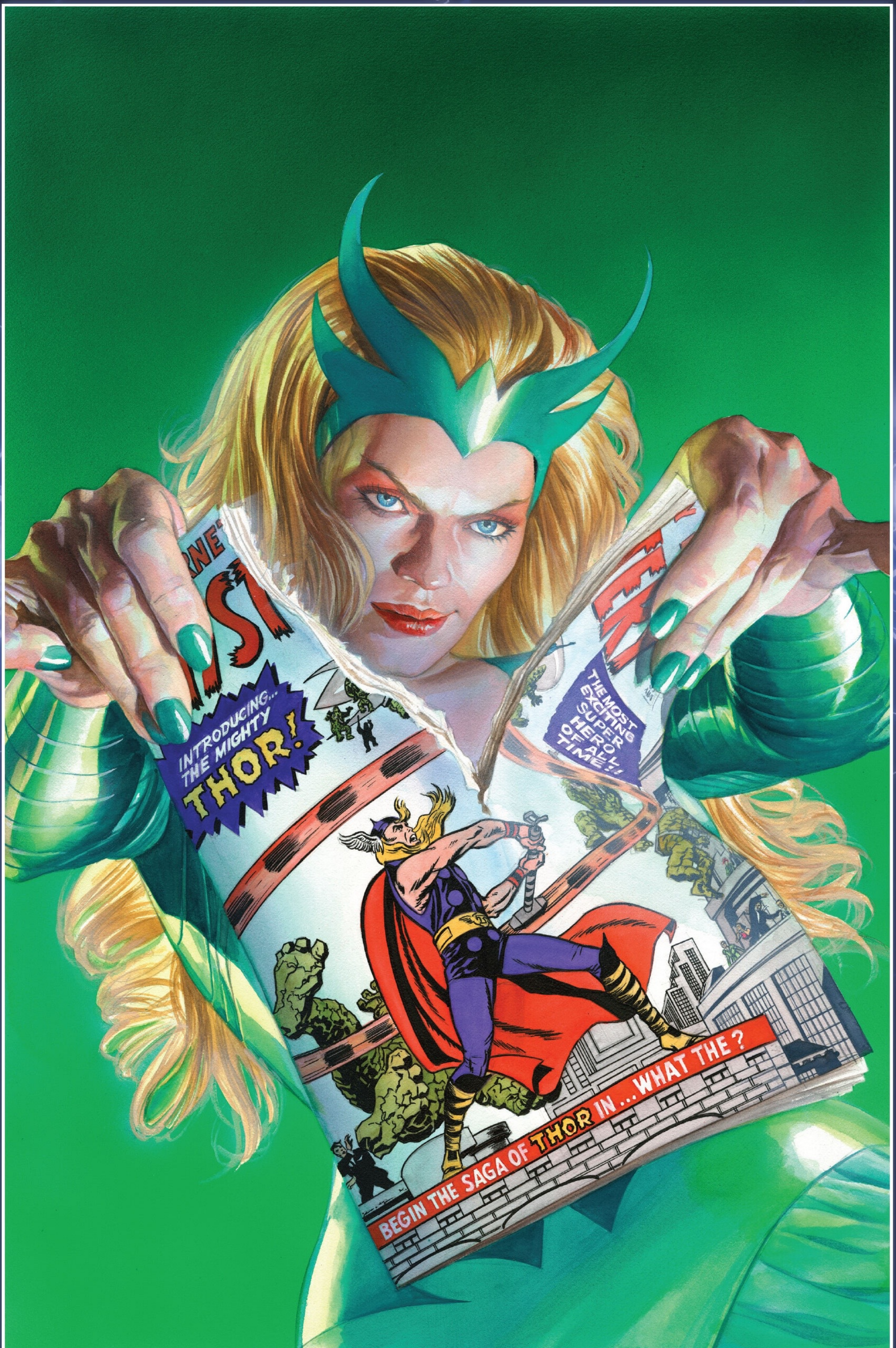

RNE'S
ST
INTRODUCING... THE MIGHTY THOR!
THE MOST EXCITING SUPER HERO OF ALL TIME!!
BEGIN THE SAGA OF THOR IN ... WHAT THE ?

"THAT IS THE LAND OF LOST CONTENT,
I SEE IT SHINING PLAIN,
THE HAPPY HIGHWAYS WHERE I WENT
AND CANNOT COME AGAIN."

- A.E. HOUSMAN, "A SHROPSHIRE LAD."

An angry storm is a terrible thing.
Thor had met with his mother **Gaea** and received her message--that if the mortals of Earth could not change, they would not survive.
To force that change while there was still time, she had invoked her fellow **Elder Gods**--who had, in turn, wreaked vast havoc on the innocent.
But could her **son** be a force of change instead? One less destructive, more **targeted?** Could Thor serve as Gaea's **mercy?**
Thor believed he could. Indeed, he had a target in mind--an enemy of old. The head of the **Roxxon Corporation...**
MINOTAUR!
BRAKOOMM
An angry storm is a terrible thing. An angry **storm god**, more so.

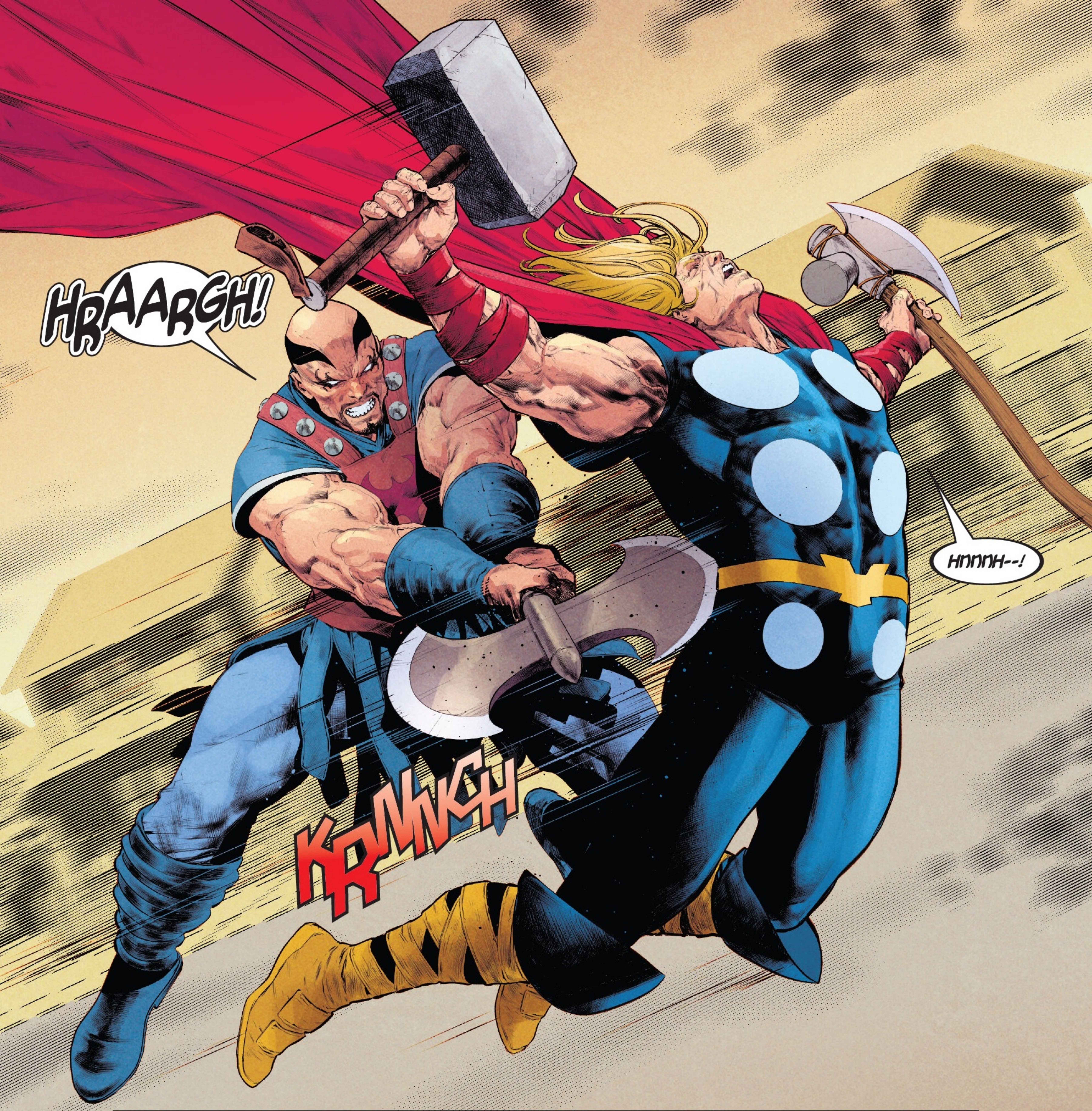
IT'S MR. DARIO AGGER WHEN I'M AT WORK, THOR. THIS IS A PLACE OF BUSINESS, AFTER ALL--NOT YOUR ROYAL RUMPUS ROOM.
DO THEY HAVE PROPERTY DAMAGE ON ASGARD? HAVE YOU THE SLIGHTEST IDEA HOW MANY LAWS YOU'RE CURRENTLY BREAKING, I WONDER?
THOSE ELEVATOR DOORS WERE REAL GOLD, YOU KNOW--INLAID WITH DIAMONDS FROM MY PRIVATE MINE.
...
GOLD AND DIAMONDS, YOU SAY?
AND WHAT IS YOUR DESK MADE OF?
FINEST BRAZILIAN MAHOGANY--
WHAMMMM
FINEST MATCHWOOD.

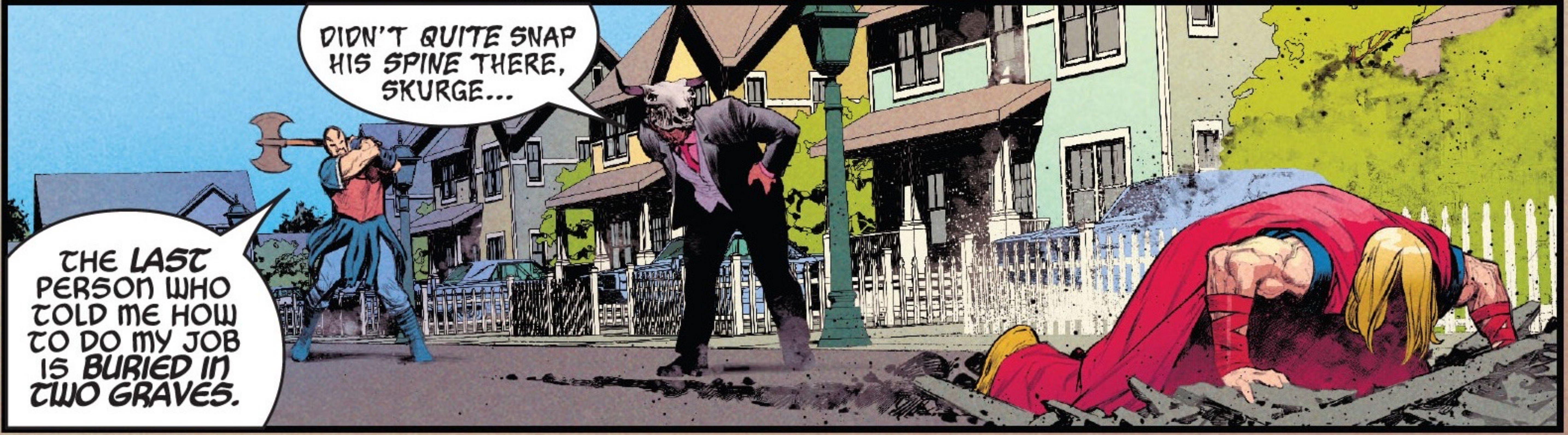
IS THAT MEANT TO *IMPRESS* ME, THOR?
SHOULD I *QUAKE* IN MY *TAILORED* SHOES...?
YOU SHOULD UNDERSTAND THE **LIMITS** OF YOUR **MORTAL LAWS.**
FOR I **OBEY** THEM AS A **COURTESY**-- AND **ONLY** WHEN THEY SERVE **JUSTICE.**
AND YOU ARE A **FINE** ONE TO TALK OF **DAMAGE** AS YOU **POISON THE EARTH ITSELF.**
AS **MIDGARD'S CHILD**--THE **TRUE SON OF THE SOIL**-- I WILL TELL YOU **PLAIN**, CREATURE.
MY MOTHER IS ILL PLEASED WITH THEE.
I THINK I'LL MAKE MY *NEXT* DESK OUT OF *CALIFORNIAN REDWOOD.* BUY *AMERICAN,* AS IT WERE.
YOUR *TEMPER'S* GETTING THE *BETTER* OF YOU, THOR.
MY WRATH IS **NOTHING** COMPARED TO THAT OF **GAEA**-- AND IT MAY **ALREADY** BE TOO LATE TO SPARE HUMANITY FROM IT.
BECAUSE OF THE **GREED** OF THOSE LIKE **YOU**, SHE HAS UNLOCKED A DOOR THAT COULD BRING **AN END TO THIS WORLD...**
HA! IS THAT *ALL* YOU'RE BRINGING TO THE TABLE? *THE END OF THE WORLD?*
BECAUSE YOU KNOW WHAT THEY *SAY,* THOR.

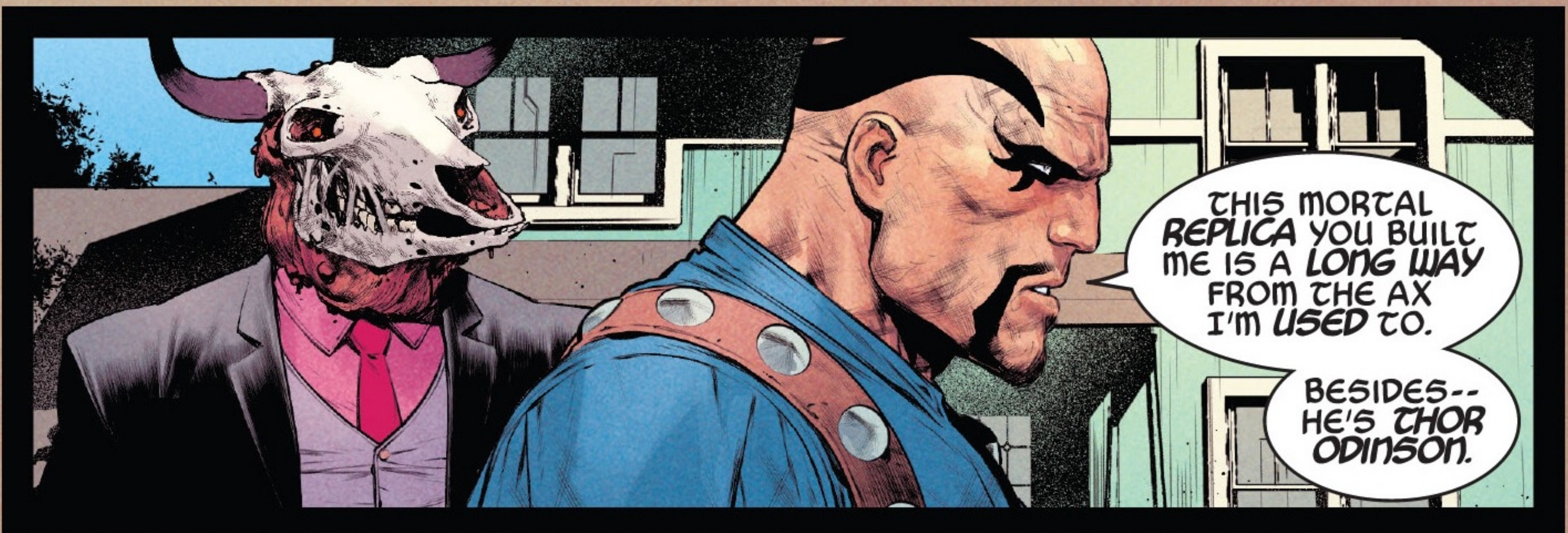
The air burned.
The land was desolate, leeched of life.
The only clouds above were ash and poison, drifting like corpses in the windless sky.
An angry storm is a terrible thing.
ROXXON
ROXXON
A dead storm, more so.
OD'S BLOOD...
WELCOME TO THE *FUTURE*, THOR--AFTER I'VE GOT IT HOW I WANT IT.
DON'T THREATEN ME WITH A GOOD TIME.
YOU HAVE BROUGHT ME THROUGH *TIME*...?
HARDLY. THIS IS A *PROOF OF CONCEPT*--A LITTLE LIKE A *HOLOGRAM* SUITE.
STILL, IT'S AN EASY MISTAKE TO *MAKE*, ISN'T IT?
AYE.
A LITTLE *TOO* EASY. THE ILLUSION IS TOO *PERFECT* FOR MORTAL MEANS TO CONJURE--NO HOLOGRAM COULD BRING *SWEAT* TO A GOD'S BROW.
YET EVEN SO, I SHOULD HAVE GUESSED IT.
SOMETHING IS NOT RIGHT WITH ME.
And though Thor could not quite think what that might *be*, he instinctively put his hand to his ax, *Tormod*...
...and the ax felt **heavy** in his hand.

AFTER THE HUMAN RACE HAS BEEN *DOWNSIZED*--*PRUNED* TO FIT THE NEXT EVOLUTION OF *CAPITALISM*--IT WILL LOOK LIKE *THIS.*
THE ROXXDOME.
THE *EXTERIOR* PROVIDES SECURITY AGAINST *OUTSIDERS*--NOT THAT THERE ARE ANY *LEFT*, BUT IT'S THE THOUGHT THAT COUNTS--
ROXXON
--WHILE THE *INSIDE* IS AN EXCUSIVE CLIMATE-CONTROLLED *PARADISE* FOR SELECT ROXXON CUSTOMERS.
HMMPH.
CAN MORTAL MONEY ***TRULY*** BUY ESCAPE FROM THE ***APOCALYPSE?***
WEALTH BUYS *POWER*--AND POWER IS A CURRENCY YOUR PRECIOUS MORTALS ARE *ALL TOO EAGER* TO ACCEPT.
ESTABLISHING A *RULING CLASS* IS THE *EASY* PART.
ONCE WE KEY THE *LIFE SUPPORT* TO THEIR BIODATA...
...NOT TO MENTION THAT OF THEIR *HEIRS*, OF COURSE...
...WELL, THE *RABBLE* WILL LEARN THEIR *PLACE.*
ONE WAY OR ANOTHER.

THAT'S THE SALES PITCH, ANYWAY--FOR THE BILLION-DOLLAR SUCKERS. I'LL BE ON SOME OTHER WORLD... STARTING OVER IN MY IMAGE...
AYE. A MUCH MORE SENSIBLE DREAM.
DO YOU KNOW WHY, AGGER? AFTER ALL THIS TIME, DO YOU KNOW WHY YOU KILL YOUR OWN PLANET FOR COIN?
WHAT CAUSED THIS BLACK WINTER IN YOUR HEART...?
OH...I COULD MAKE A SPEECH, I SUPPOSE.
SOME ROXXTUBE-READY BLATHER--POP-FASCISM FOR THE RUBES AND THE TECH BROS.
ROXXON
I COULD BLAME MY TRAGIC CHILDHOOD OR THE LUST FOR BLOOD AND CRUELTY THAT NEVER ABATES...OR REVENGE, OF COURSE...
YOU'D BELIEVE REVENGE...
BUT THE TRUTH, THOR? ABSOLUTE AND UNVARNISHED?
I LIKE IT WHEN THE NUMBER GOES UP. THAT'S ALL.
BECAUSE THAT MEANS I WIN. THAT MEANS I'M BETTER.
AND THAT'S ALL THERE IS.
ANYWAY.
THINK FAST, THUNDER GOD.


HRAARGH!
HNNNH--!
KRNNCH


DIDN'T QUITE SNAP HIS SPINE THERE, SKURGE...
THE LAST PERSON WHO TOLD ME HOW TO DO MY JOB IS BURIED IN TWO GRAVES.


THIS MORTAL REPLICA YOU BUILT ME IS A LONG WAY FROM THE AX I'M USED TO.
BESIDES-- HE'S THOR ODINSON.

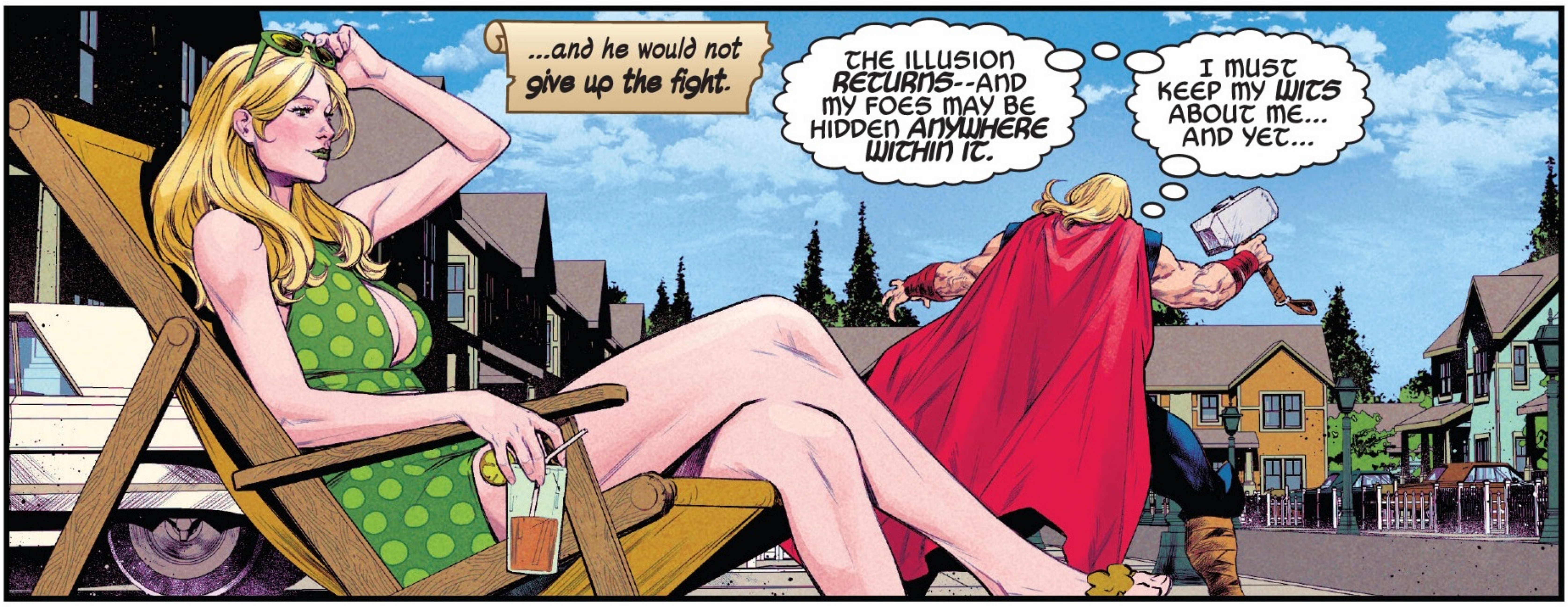
SO IT'LL TAKE MORE THAN ONE BLOW...
SKURGE? THE EXECUTIONER?
I WAS WARNED OF YOUR COMING...
...BUT TO FIND YOU HERE?
WORKING FOR HIM?
HNNH!
KRRNCH
YOU DISAPPOINT ME.
YOU'RE DISAPPOINTED? YOU BRING URU, AND THE BULL-MAN HERE GIVES ME CARBON STEEL.
MIGHT AS WELL BE PAPER!
MJOLNIR--
HE HAS THE LEVERAGE-- TWISTING THE HAMMER FROM MY GRASP ERE I CAN THINK!
ERE I CAN THINK...
I SEE YOU HAVE A SECOND WEAPON, THUNDERER--

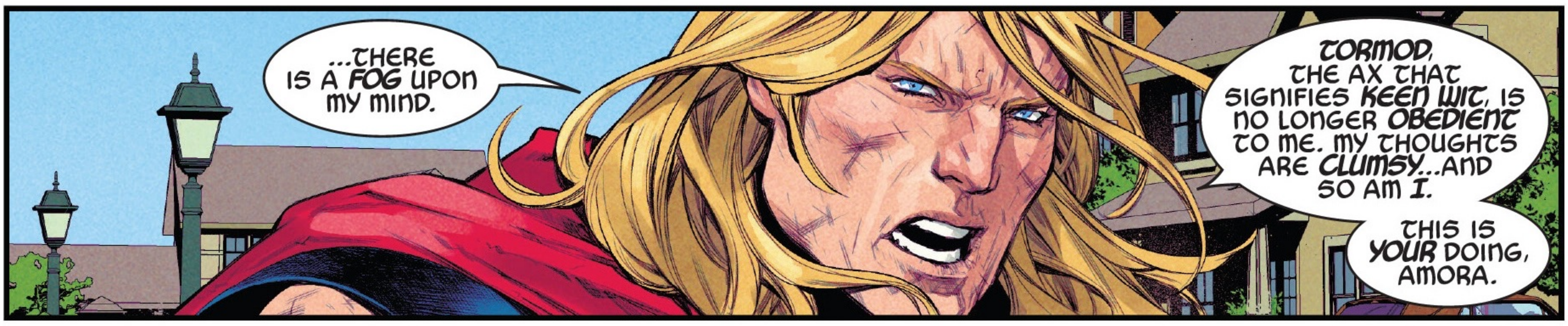
--SO DO I!
Once again, Thor was too slow--and Skurge's great blow sent the Odinson flying...
...right out of the illusion.
OW.
SKURGE HAS GROWN STRONGER, IT SEEMS. AND QUICKER... WHILE I FIND MYSELF SLUGGISH, STUMBLING FROM ONE ERROR TO ANOTHER.
I CAME HERE WITH NO TRUE PLAN OF MY OWN--AND THUS, FELL INTO AGGER'S. WHEN DID I BECOME SO FOOLISH?
I FEEL I AM SURROUNDED BY CLUES...
MJOLNIR, MY HAMMER! TORMOD, MY AX!
TO ME!
...YET I CANNOT SEE THE OBVIOUS.
THAP

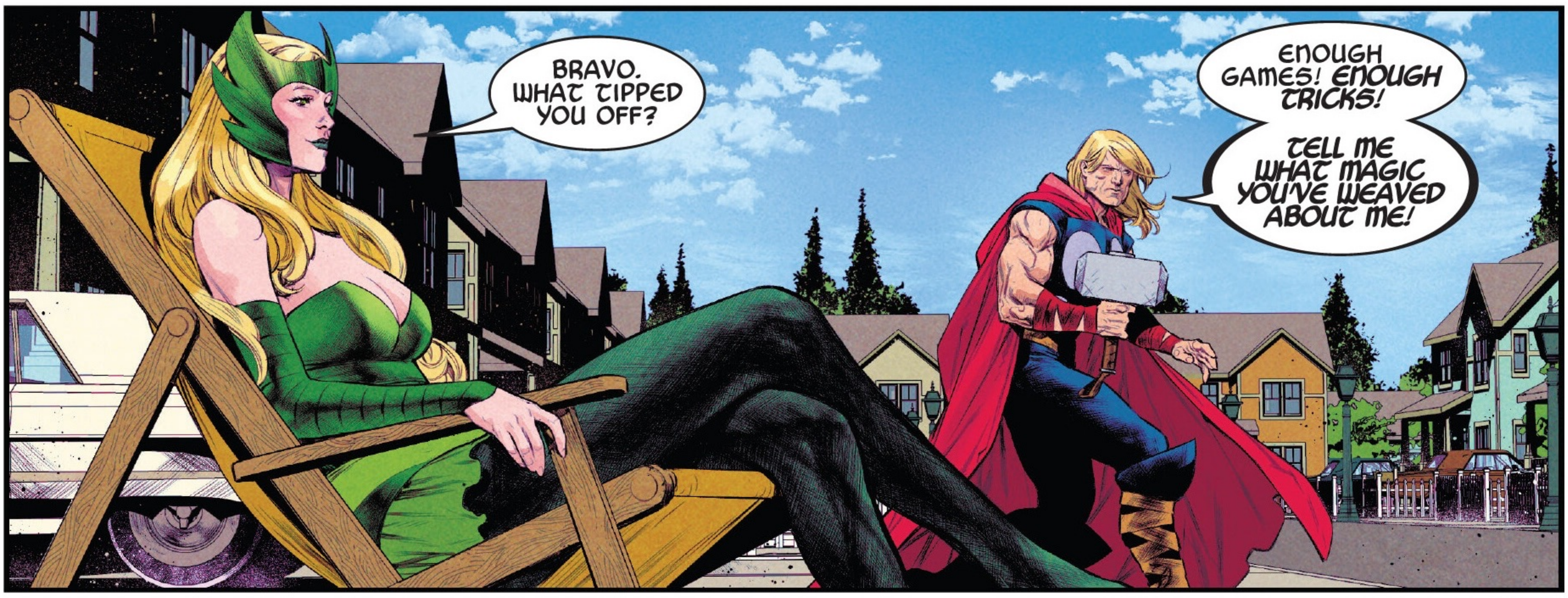
YOU SHOULD PUT AN INSCRIPTION ON THIS ONE TOO, THOR. JUST SO PEOPLE KNOW HOW IT WORKS.
"WHOSOEVER HOLDS THIS AX, IF THEY BE WISE, SHALL POSSESS..."
WELL, THEY'LL POSSESS THE AX OF THOR. BUT IT'S A NICE AX.
HEAVY AS ALL HEL--BUT ANY WISDOM I EVER HAD WAS SPARSE AND HARD-WON. I ONLY TRULY BECAME WISE AT GJALLERBRU, ON THE DAY OF MY ENDING.
REMEMBER? WHEN I STOOD IN YOUR PLACE? WHEN I STOLE YOUR DEATH?
IT WAS THE MAKING OF ME, THOR.
I WANT IT BACK.
MY DREAMS SHOWED A PROPHECY OF DOOM FOR WHOEVER CARRIES THY GODLY WEAPONS...SO NOW THAT WILL BE ME.
YOU SPEAK IN RIDDLES, EXECUTIONER.
BUT IF YOU STAND OUTSIDE VALHALLA'S HALL, YOU ARE AGAIN A CITIZEN OF ASGARD--SUBJECT AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE ALL-FATHER.
AND THOR WILL NOT ALLOW ANY ASGARDIAN TO MEET DEATH WITHOUT A FIGHT--
Ill-chosen words. For they fell on unseen ears.
And while an angry storm god is a terrible thing...

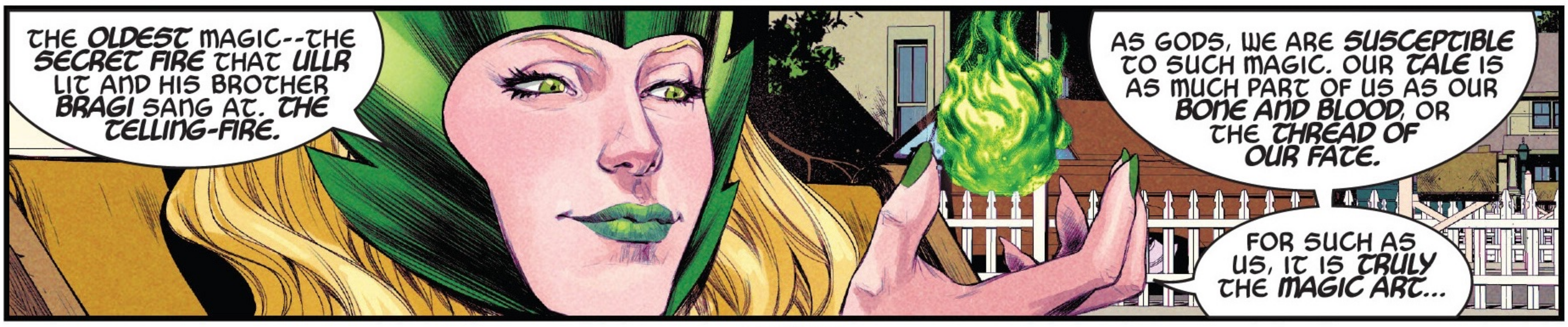
...an angry Enchantress is more so.
AND THEY SAY LOKI'S THE LIAR IN THE FAMILY.

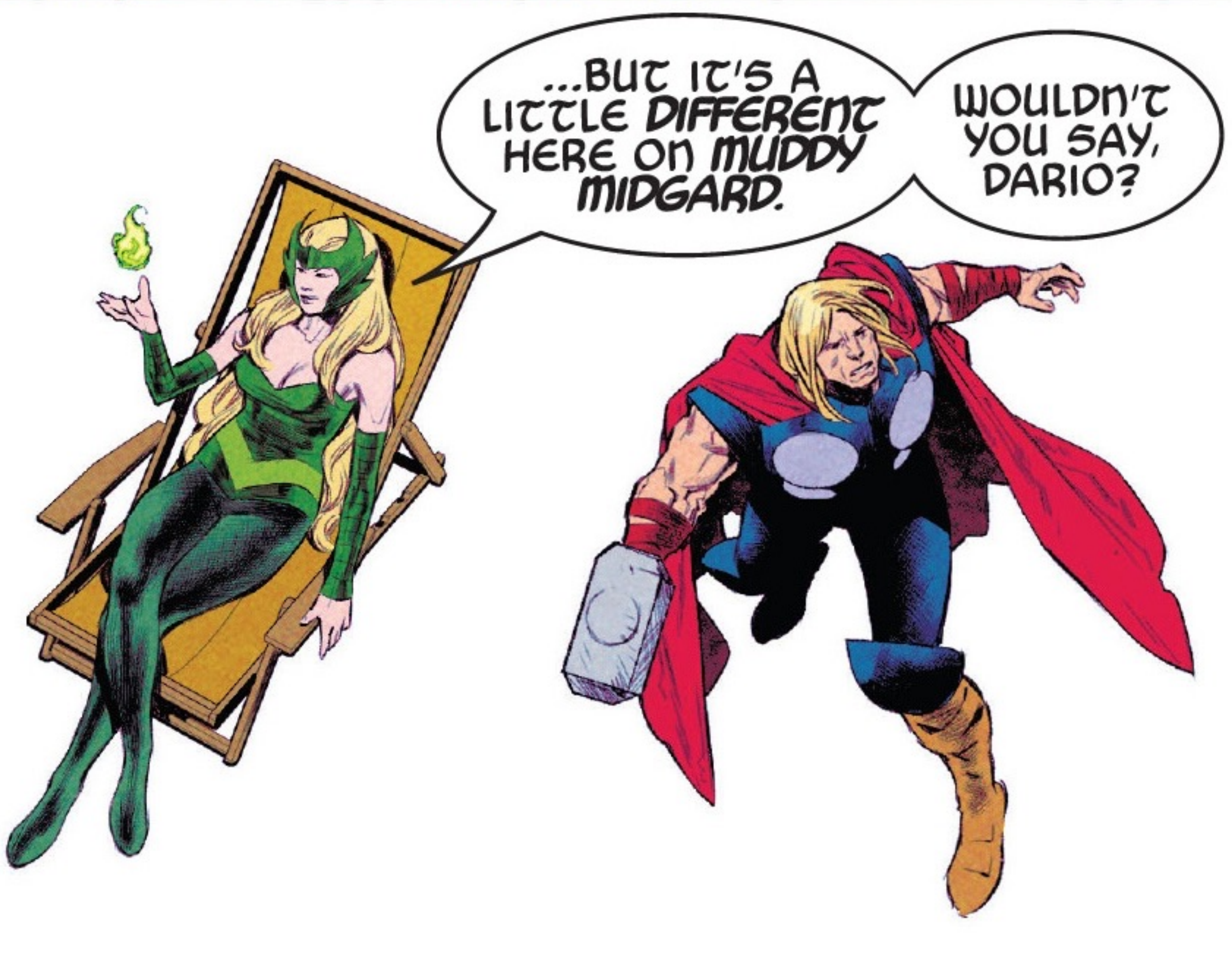
AM... AMORA...
IF WE'RE SPEAKING OF THOSE YOU LET DIE, SKURGE IS THE OBVIOUS EXAMPLE. I WAS MOST UPSET AT THAT.
AS I RECALL, IT WAS HEIMDALL WHO COMFORTED ME...
GOOD OLD HEIMDALL. I'M GLAD SOMEONE WAS THERE.
WHATEVER HAPPENED TO HIM?
OH, SKURGE! YOU BIG SILLY. HE WAS ALLOWED TO MEET DEATH, OF COURSE.
STABBED IN THE BACK BY A MERE MORTAL...AND WHERE WAS THOR? OH, BUSY, BUSY.
MY CHILDREN WERE KIND, AFTERWARD. ASHAMED OF ME, BUT KIND. DEAR ALVI AND DEAR, DEAR IRIC.
IRIC WAS MURDERED SOON AFTER--BY A FELLOW STUDENT AT THAT BOR-DAMNED MAGIC SCHOOL.
WHERE WAS THOR?
BUSY.
BUSY, BUSY.
There was a truth in her words--one that stung Thor's very heart. But he had spoken true, as well...


...and he would not give up the fight.
THE ILLUSION RETURNS--AND MY FOES MAY BE HIDDEN ANYWHERE WITHIN IT.
I MUST KEEP MY WITS ABOUT ME... AND YET...


...THERE IS A FOG UPON MY MIND.
TORMOD, THE AX THAT SIGNIFIES KEEN WIT, IS NO LONGER OBEDIENT TO ME. MY THOUGHTS ARE CLUMSY...AND SO AM I.
THIS IS YOUR DOING, AMORA.


BRAVO. WHAT TIPPED YOU OFF?
ENOUGH GAMES! ENOUGH TRICKS!
TELL ME WHAT MAGIC YOU'VE WEAVED ABOUT ME!


THE OLDEST MAGIC--THE SECRET FIRE THAT ULLR LIT AND HIS BROTHER BRAGI SANG AT. THE TELLING-FIRE.
AS GODS, WE ARE SUSCEPTIBLE TO SUCH MAGIC. OUR TALE IS AS MUCH PART OF US AS OUR BONE AND BLOOD, OR THE THREAD OF OUR FATE.
FOR SUCH AS US, IT IS TRULY THE MAGIC ART...


...BUT IT'S A LITTLE DIFFERENT HERE ON MUDDY MIDGARD.
WOULDN'T YOU SAY, DARIO?

"ART."
I NEVER LIKED THAT WORD.
I PREFER "CONTENT."
AGGER! COWARD AMONG COWARDS!
SHOW YOUR TRUE SELF! FACE ME AS A MAN!
IT'S SO EFFICIENT. IT'S THE UNIT OF PRODUCT TO BE SOLD...AND THE FEELING YOU'RE SELLING WITH IT.
IN SUCH AN ANXIOUS WORLD...
WHAT...?
...WHO DOESN'T WANT TO BE CONTENT?
BROKK

ARE YOU CONTENT NOW, THOR?
MONSTER.
TRICK MY SENSES AND CLOUD MY MIND AS YOU *WILL*-- THERE IS *ONE THING* I KNOW AS A *CERTAINTY.*
YOU WILL MEET YOUR *DEATH* ON THIS DAY.
IN THIS *VERY ROOM.*
I SWEAR IT, BEAST IN A MAN'S SKIN.
I SWEAR IT--
NO.
I'M MEETING DEATH.
I'VE GOT YOUR *AX*. ALL I NEED IS THE *HAMMER*. SO *GIVE IT UP* AND LET ME *TAKE YOUR PLACE.*
DON'T MAKE US DO IT THE *HARD WAY*--

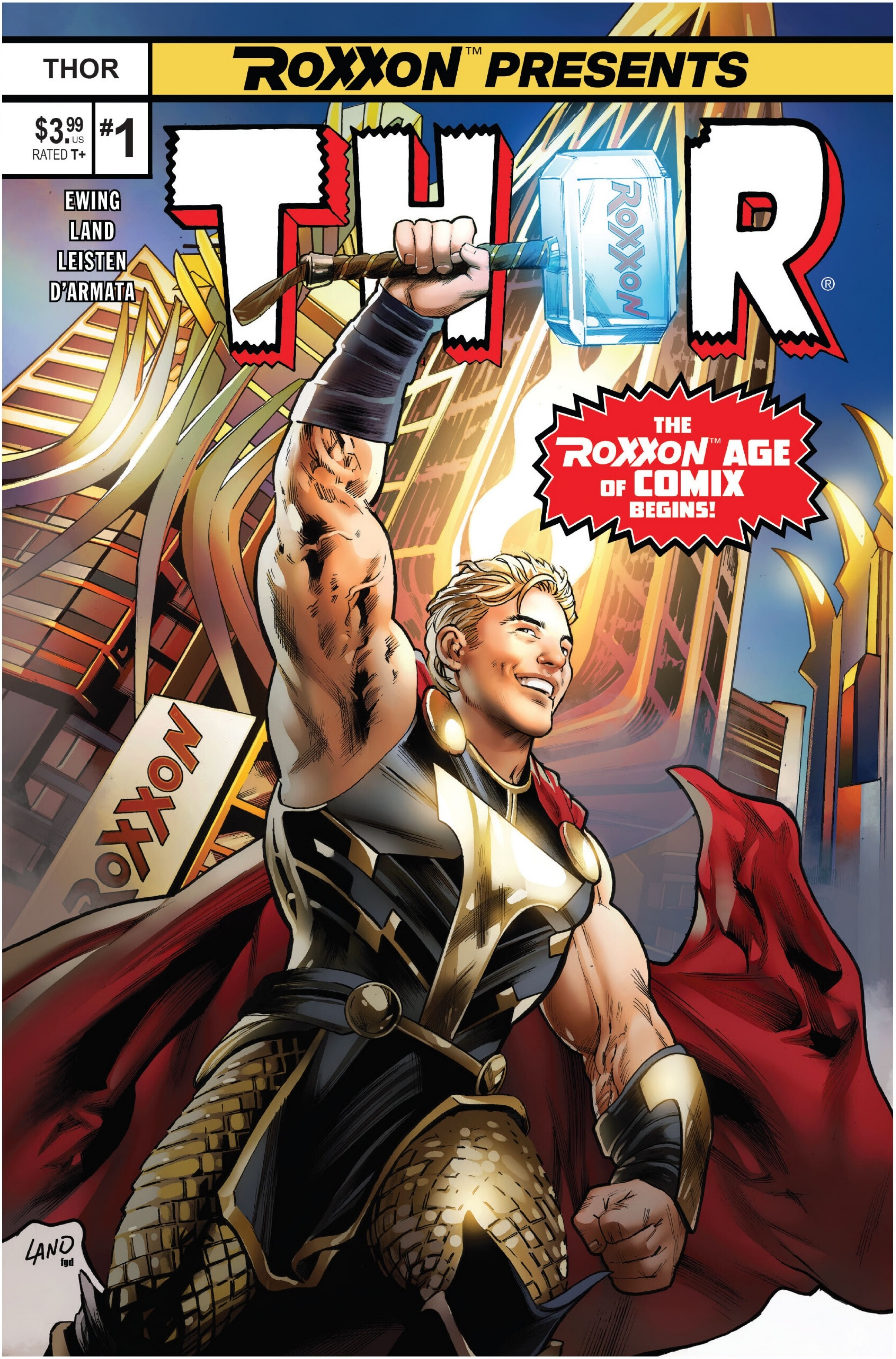
WHHNCH
NO!
NEVER!
HNNH!
IF DEATH WAITS-- IT WAITS FOR ME! AND I WILL FIGHT IT BACK--FOR THE THUNDER GOD BOWS TO NONE!
THE THREAD OF MY FATE IS MY OWN, SKURGE!
MY TALE IS MY OWN!
THE HARD WAY, THEN.
I WAS MAKING A JOKE EARLIER, THOR-- A PUN. YOU SEE... YOUR TALE ISN'T YOUR OWN.
NOT HERE.
WHAT MEAN YOU...?
ARE YOU CONTENT, THOR?
ON PRESENTS
THOR
THOR #1
THE ROXXON AGE OF COMIX BEGINS!
ROXXON
LAND

A PERIODICAL? IS THIS ANOTHER ILLUSION...?
QUITE REAL. ONE MORE THING I HID FROM YOU-- BUT I'M GLAD IT'S TIME FOR THE REVEAL.
I PUT A LOT OF WORK INTO IT.
SOME TIME AGO, YOU MADE AN ERROR, THOR. YOU ALLOWED SOMEONE TO PUBLISH YOUR ADVENTURES.
NOT PUBLIC-DOMAIN RETELLINGS OF ANCIENT LEGENDS. MONTH-BY-MONTH REPORTS OF YOUR CURRENT EXPLOITS.
ROXXON PRESENTS
I'M SURE IT SEEMED HARMLESS ENOUGH. WHY NOT SIGN YOUR STORY AWAY FOR A CHARITABLE DONATION? IT'S ONLY INK ON PAPER.
ONLY THESE DAYS, IT'S NOT. THE STORY ISN'T JUST A STORY--IT'S A MOVIE, A TOY, A CAKE TOPPER. AN ENTIRE CORPORATE MACHINE.
NOW I CONTROL THAT MACHINE. IT BRINGS ME PROFIT. IT BRINGS ME POWER. IT MAKES THE NUMBER GO UP.
AND THAT'S SWEET ENOUGH... BUT WHEN SKURGE AND THE ENCHANTRESS APPROACHED ME, I DISCOVERED THAT IT CAN DO EVEN MORE.
IT CAN TAKE YOUR POWER AWAY.
ROXXON PRESENTS

I DON'T HAVE LOKI'S INNATE SKILL WITH STORY-MAGIC. BUT THANKS TO DARIO, WHAT I LACK IN FINESSE... I MAKE UP FOR IN VOLUME.
A COUPLE OF MILLION MORTALS READING THIS? ON PAPER, ON FREE WEBSITES, A PANEL AT A TIME ON SOCIAL MEDIA? THAT'S A SPELL BIG ENOUGH TO AFFECT EVEN AN ALL-FATHER.
ROXXON PRESENTS
THOR
THE ROXXON AGE OF COMIX BEGINS!
YOUR STORY ON MIDGARD, THOR. THE STORY OF A BOOR--AN OAF--A FOOL. NO WONDER YOU'RE BEFUDDLED--IT'S LIKE AN INFECTION IN THE BONE.
WHILE YOU'RE IN MIDGARD, YOU HAVE TO CONSTANTLY FIGHT IT OFF...AND THAT EFFORT MAKES YOU LESS, IN MANY WAYS.
GO ON.
TAKE IT.
I KNOW YOU'RE CURIOUS.
IT'S A DISTRACTION.
A TRAP.
WHAT, YOU THINK WE'LL SUCKER PUNCH YOU AS YOU TURN THE PAGES? READ IT, THOR. KNOW YOUR ENEMY.
DIVE IN.
And so--enchanted--Thor did.
And to dive into a story is not so terrible a thing.

But when the story climbs out...
ROXXON
IT'S JUST A COMIC, AFTER ALL.
THOR
...is more so.

THE LAND OF LOST CONTENT


THOR
ROXXON™ PRESENTS
$3.99 US
RATED T+
#1
EWING
LAND
LEISTEN
D'ARMATA
THOR®
ROXXON
THE ROXXON™ AGE OF COMIX BEGINS!
ROXXON
LAND fgd

ROXXON™ PRESENTS THOR

LOCATION: THE PALACE OF ODIN.
DATELINE: THE RECENT PAST.
AS THOU KNOWEST, MY SON, I ONCE BANISHED THEE TO FAR EARTHGARD*--THAT THOU MIGHT LEARN HUMILITY.
*EARTH.
BUT NOW I MAY REVEAL--'TWAS MERELY A TEST OF FEALTY! FOR A GOD MUST NE'ER BE HUMBLE, EVER!
THIS WORLD WAS MADE FOR THEE, MY SON--TO TAKE AND TO GRAB WITH THINE OWN HANDS, AS IF IT WERE THY BIG HAMMER!
FOR THOU--THE HEIR TO THE GOLDEN REALM--HATH SURELY EARNED THE RIGHT!
YET ONE THING MORE DO I ASK OF THEE--FOR THE ALL-FATHER HATH RAISED NO BUMS.
THOU MUST GET A HAIRCUT, MY SON.
AND A JOB IN TECH.
...
RADICAL.

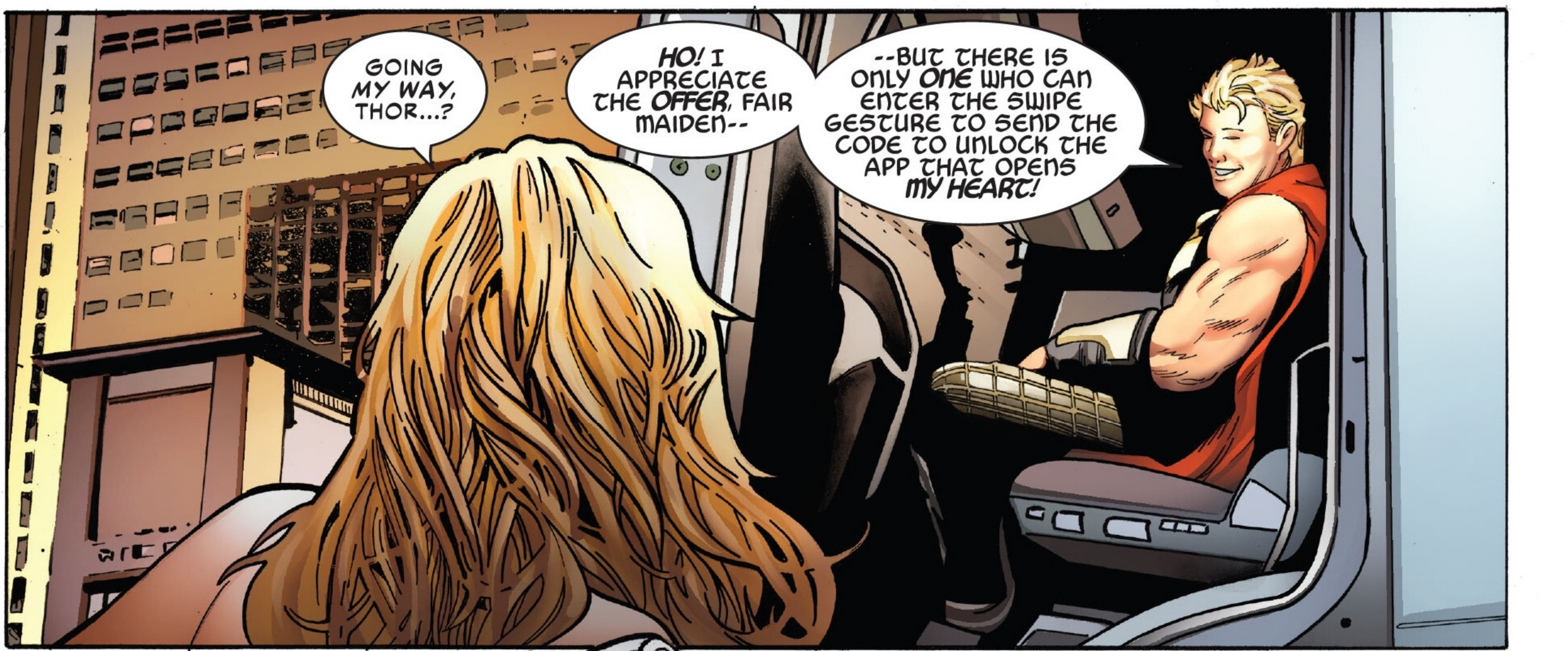
DARIO AGGER PROUDLY PRESENTS ROXXON PRESENTS: THOR! IN...

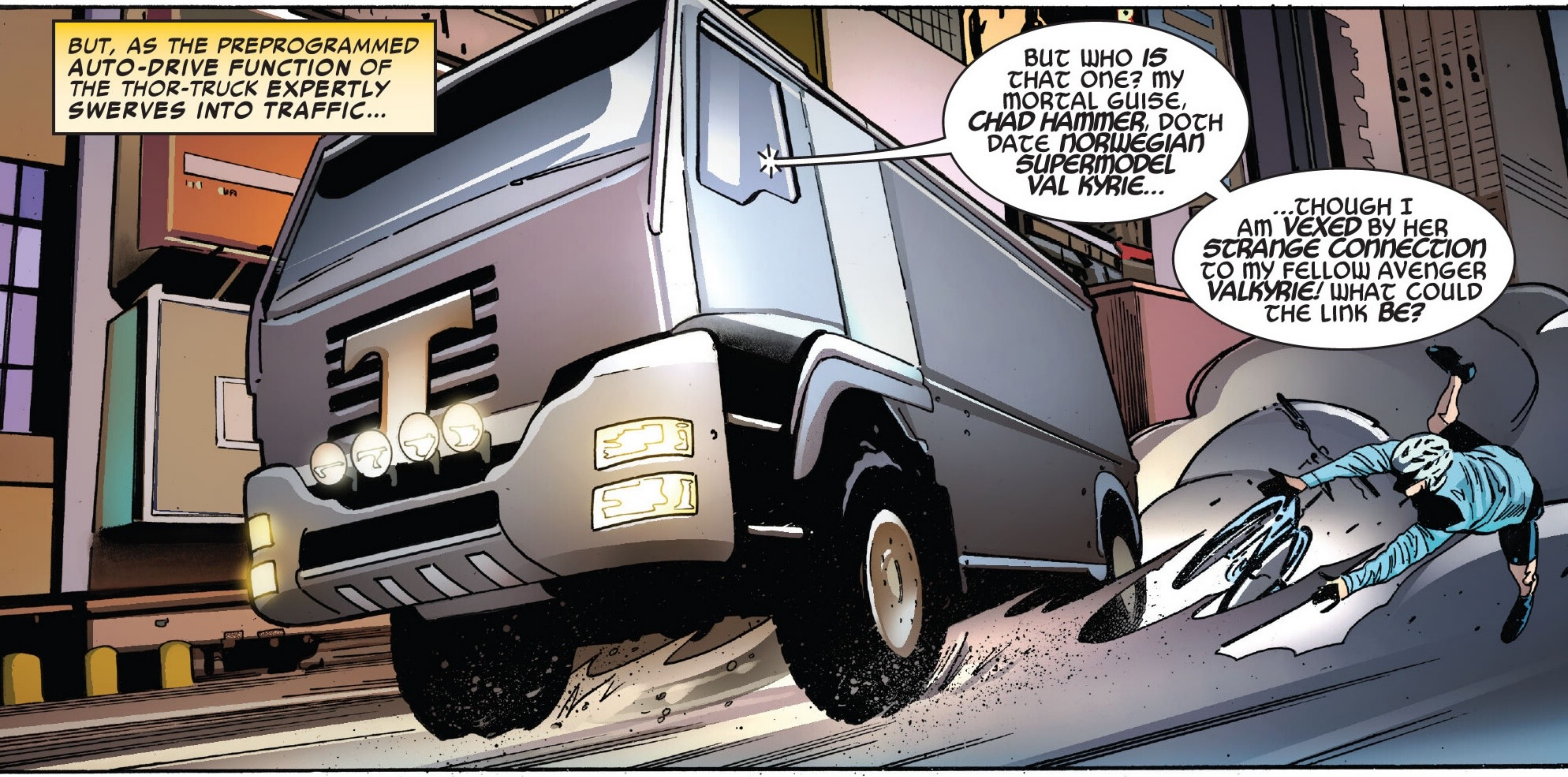
"HATE IS A COLOR CALLED...GREEN!"

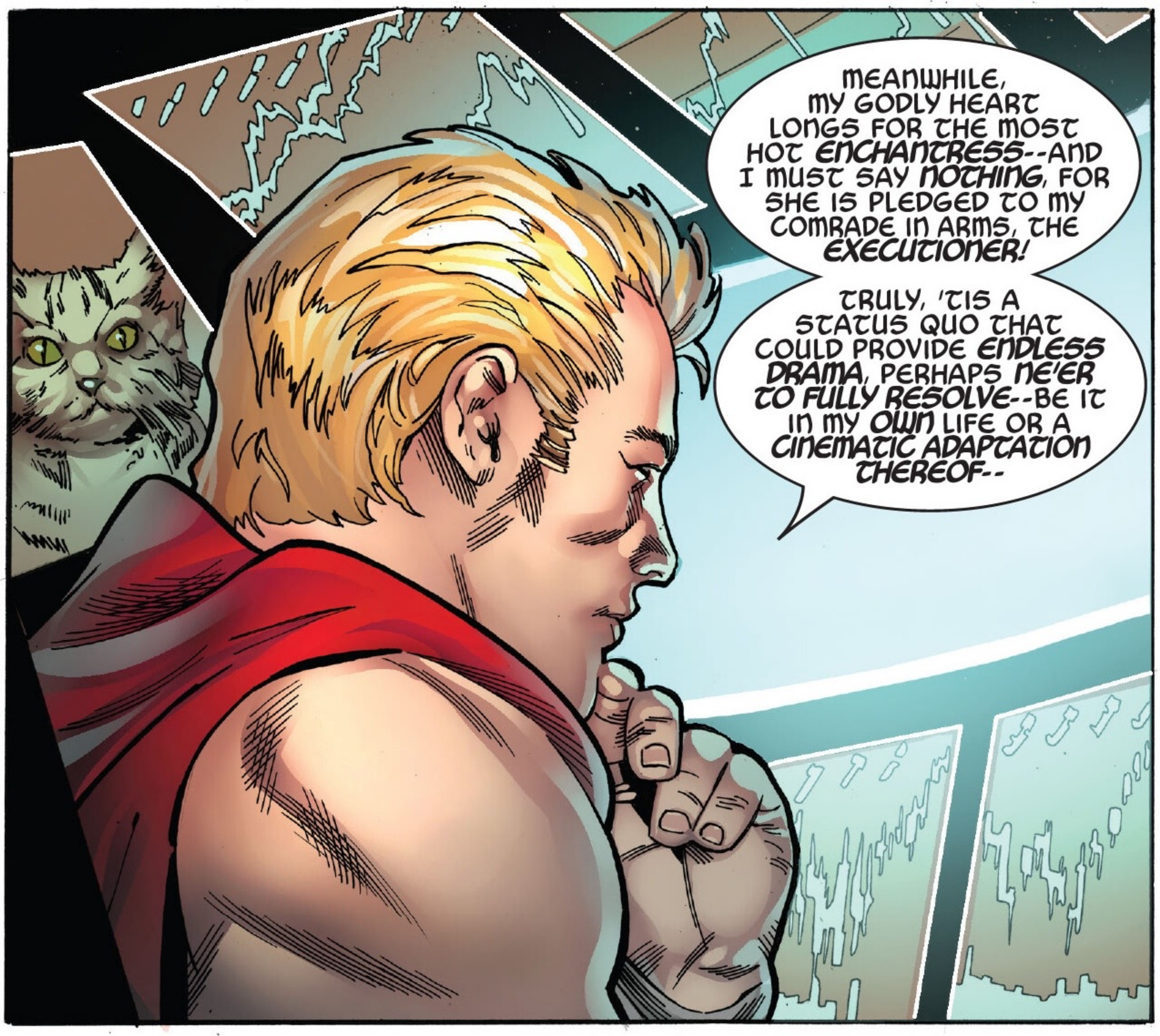
ROXXON
AYE--'TIS *RADICAL INDEED* TO RETURN TO EARTHGARD!*
AND MUCH HAS *CHANGED* SINCE I WAS CALLED AWAY**--THANKS TO MY *GOOD FRIENDS* AT *ROXXON INCORPORATED!*
FOR I HAVE DONE AS MY FATHER ODIN DECREED--AND NOW *ROXXON* IS WHERE I CHOOSE TO MAKE THE WORLD A *BETTER PLACE*...
...BOTH IN MY *MORTAL IDENTITY* AS *CHAD HAMMER*, LEADING INFLUENCER IN THE FIELD OF A.I.-BASED HEDGE FUNDS--AND AS *MIGHTY THOR!*
ROXXON
ROXXON
ROXXON
ROXXON'S AL EWING WRITER
ROXXON'S GREG LAND PENCILER
ROXXON'S JAY LEISTEN INKER
ROXXON'S FRANK D'ARMATA COLORIST
ROXXON'S VC's JOE SABINO LETTERER
*STILL EARTH.
**SEE ABSOLUTE ABSOLUTION: THOR: TOURNAMENT OF ESPORTS: ORIGINS #0 FOR THE FULL STORY!

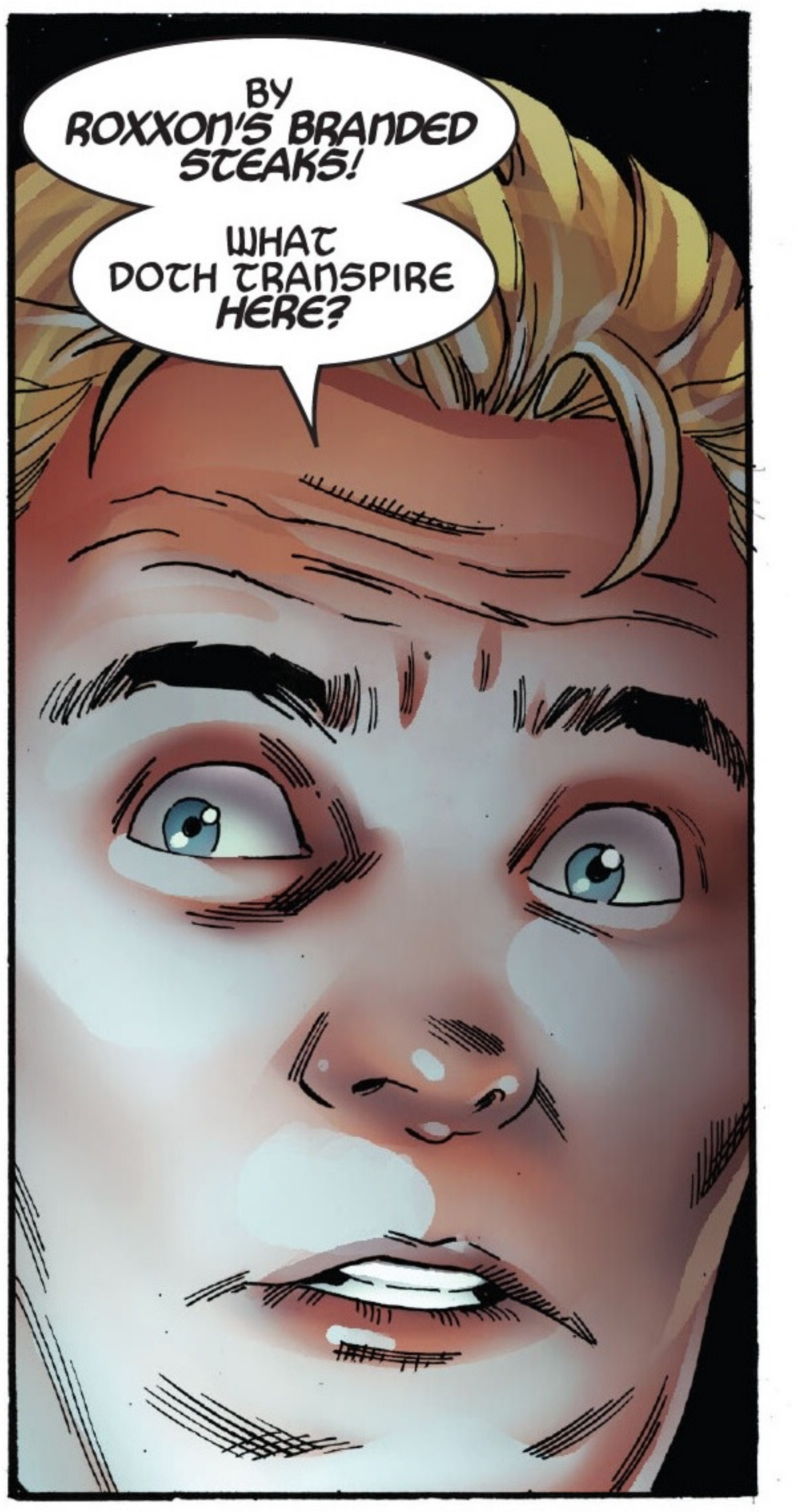
BREEP!
ROXXON
BUT VERILY--MY SMART HAMMER, MJOLNIR PREMIUM, DOTH ALERT ME TO SOME PRESSING MATTER! OR PERHAPS TO A HILARIOUS MEME!
I MUST INVESTIGATE FURTHER...BUT NOT BY FLYING THROUGH THE SKIES LIKE A COMMON LOUT!
INSTEAD, I SHALL TAKE TRANSPORTATION MORE FITTING FOR A GOD--
--MY MOST AWESOME SET OF WHEELS!
GASP! ROXXON PRESENTS: THOR!
ROXXON
THOR--DOES THAT SWEET RIDE REALLY BELONG TO YOU...?
THE ONE ACROSS THE ROAD FROM THE SPORTS CAR? AYE!
BEHOLD, MORTAL MAIDEN...
...THE THOR-TRUCK!
WOW!
IT'S SO... RECTANGULAR!

FORGED BY ROXXON ENGINEERS FROM THE STRONGEST URU--WITHOUT SUCH MORTAL WEAKNESSES AS "CRUMPLE ZONES," "WING MIRRORS" OR "DOOR HANDLES"!
AND IT GETS A FULL NINE MILES TO THE GALLON!
NO DOOR HANDLES? THAT'S SO FUTURISTIC!
AYE! TO GAIN ENTRY, I SIMPLY SWIPE MY HAMMER-- LIKE SO!
BLARP
HO! FINGERPRINT UNRECOGNIZED!
'TIS A POWERFUL SECURITY PROGRAM INDEED!
HA! THIRD TIME LUCKY, METHINKS!
BLARP
BLARP
ROXXON
AH! SUCCESS-- AND NOW THE HAMMER SENDS A ONE-TIME TWENTY-DIGIT CODE TO MY SMART BRACER!
ALL I MUST NOW DO IS...
BZZT
...OPEN MY ROXXBOOK ACCOUNT... ENTER MY PIN...AGREE TO THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS...
...CONFIRM... CONFIRM CONFIRMATION... AND...
CHONK!
ALL THANKS TO ROXXON'S MIDDLEMAN™ INTERFACE!
AS EASY AS THAT? WHO NEEDS KEYS?


GOING MY WAY, THOR...?
HO! I APPRECIATE THE OFFER, FAIR MAIDEN--
--BUT THERE IS ONLY ONE WHO CAN ENTER THE SWIPE GESTURE TO SEND THE CODE TO UNLOCK THE APP THAT OPENS MY HEART!


BUT, AS THE PREPROGRAMMED AUTO-DRIVE FUNCTION OF THE THOR-TRUCK EXPERTLY SWERVES INTO TRAFFIC...
BUT WHO IS THAT ONE? MY MORTAL GUISE, CHAD HAMMER, DOTH DATE NORWEGIAN SUPERMODEL VAL KYRIE...
...THOUGH I AM VEXED BY HER STRANGE CONNECTION TO MY FELLOW AVENGER VALKYRIE! WHAT COULD THE LINK BE?
T


MEANWHILE, MY GODLY HEART LONGS FOR THE MOST HOT ENCHANTRESS--AND I MUST SAY NOTHING, FOR SHE IS PLEDGED TO MY COMRADE IN ARMS, THE EXECUTIONER!
TRULY, 'TIS A STATUS QUO THAT COULD PROVIDE ENDLESS DRAMA, PERHAPS NE'ER TO FULLY RESOLVE--BE IT IN MY OWN LIFE OR A CINEMATIC ADAPTATION THEREOF--


BY ROXXON'S BRANDED STEAKS!
WHAT DOTH TRANSPIRE HERE?

LOCATION: ROXXON HEADQUARTERS, NEW YORK!
DATELINE: RIGHT NOW!
ROXXON
ONE, TWO, THREE, FOUR! WHO DO WE LIKE? NOT THOR!
THIS must be what yon real-time alert portended!
A crowd of unruly youths-- blocking the entrance to Roxxon's executive parking lot!
DOWN WITH STUFF
GOOD THINGS ARE BAD ACTUALLY
THOR MAKES ME SORE
GRRR!
BOO!
YOUNG PEOPLE! What mean you, keeping the God of Thunder from his parking spot?
BOO! CRAM IT, THOR!
LOUSY SELLOUT!
OR MAKES E SORE
RRR!
PLOP
-CHOKE!- A TRASH! Upon my very windshield!
ROXXON
The glass is bulletproof in case of urban threat, as is standard-- but my feelings are not!
Thus, I summon the storm--as easily as I might summon a delicious triple-beef Roxxburger via Roxxon Grub-2-Go!

YOWZA! HE MEANS BUSINESS!
KRA-
BA-KOOMMM
BOOK IT, FELLOW KIDS!
THOSE YOUTHFUL VILLAINS ARE HEAVILY TRAUMATIZED--AS WAS MINE INTENTION!
YET THE SORROWS OF THOR ARE DEEPER THAN EVEN THE SHRAPNEL WOUNDS FROM AN EXPLODING SIDEWALK...
...FOR ALL I HAVE E'ER WISHED FOR IN THE REALM OF MORTALS...WAS FOR THEM TO THINK I AM COOL!
AND NOW... NOW THEY DON'T AS MUCH!
TRULY IT IS SAID--EVEN A THUNDER GOD CAN CRY!

DATELINE: MINUTES LATER, THOR CONSULTS WITH HIS BEST FRIEND AND MENTOR, THE MYTHIC MINOTAUR...
I'M SORRY YOU HAD TO EXPERIENCE THAT, THOR!
THESE CHILDREN AREN'T COMPLETELY EVIL...JUST MOSTLY! THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND THE TRUE HORROR OF A WORLD WITHOUT ROXXON!
YES, WITHOUT OUR PRODUCTS, IT'S POSSIBLE THAT EARTH* MIGHT SURVIVE TO A RIPE OLD AGE--BUT ISN'T IT QUALITY OF LIFE THAT MATTERS?
CALL ME A SENTIMENTAL FOOL, THUNDER GOD--BUT DARN IT, I WON'T GIVE UP ON A BETTER WORLD... JUST BECAUSE IT'S A HOTTER WORLD!
*EARTHGARD.
ROXXON
BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT BEING ALIVE IS ALL ABOUT! FOR THE FEW WHO WILL BE!
SO SAY WE ALL, MY FRIEND!
THOR--I'M TASKING YOU WITH FINDING OUT WHAT'S CAUSING THIS! WHY HAVE THE KIDS EMBRACED THE LIE THAT CAPITALISM DOESN'T WORK?
HMMM... A LIE!
COULD THE SINISTER MIND BEHIND ALL THIS BE...MY EVIL BROTHER LOKI? AGAIN?

LOCATION: THOR'S EVIL BROTHER LOKI!
DATELINE: AGAIN!
BAH! YOU YOUNG FOOLS! HOW COULD YOU NOT CRUSH THE SIMPERING THOR WHEN YOU HAD A WHOLE BANANA SKIN TO DO IT WITH?
B-BUT, MISTER LOKI--WE'RE JUST IDLE SCROUNGERS WHO'VE NEVER DONE A DAY'S WORK IN OUR LIVES! ALL WE KNOW HOW TO DO IS COMPLAIN!
AND I KNOW YOU SAID THAT ROXXON IS BAD AND ALL...BUT THE THOR-TRUCK IS "WICKED BODACIOUS"! AND ONLY $99,999.99!
HANG IN THERE, EARTH!
DON'T EAT A PUFFI
FRANKLY WE'RE AL COMMU
SHOULD WE REALLY TURN THE AWESOME POWER OF OUR CANCEL CULTURE ON THOR...?
HMM! TIME FOR ANOTHER MANIPULATIVE LIE, METHINKS!
WHAT?
NOTHING!
CLIMATE CHANGE IS REAL!
NOW QUICKLY, MY JEJUNE CHUMS--MAKE A TEN-HOUR VIDEO ESSAY ABOUT IT! AND THOR!
YAAAAY! TEN-HOUR VIDEO ESSAY!
LITTLE DO THEY KNOW--I MADE UP ALL OF ROXXON'S SO-CALLED CRIMES! AND DUMPING TOXIC WASTE IN ENDANGERED WETLANDS ISN'T EVEN A CRIME!*
MY EVIL KNOWS NO BOUNDS...AS THESE FOOLS WILL SOON LEARN WHEN I DESTROY THOR--
--AND ALSO THEM!
*SUPREME COURT JUDGMENT PENDING.

CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING.

FIFTY STATES OF AMERICA. FIFTY YEARS OF ROXXON.

Can you believe it's only been fifty years since the formation of the ROXXON global brand? That's one year for every state where Roxxon's keeping the lights blazing...the highways humming...the home fires burning. And since 1974, we've branched out--into aviation, electronics, pharmaceuticals, the military, entertainment, news media...even the comic you hold in your hands is a ROXXON product. And with ROXXON FUTURE™ using the blockchain to lower bad emissions by 20% over the next sixty years...we're even in the air you breathe.

No need to thank us, America. Just keep being you...and we'll keep being us.

ROXXON
ROXXON
THE GREATEST COMPANY ON EARTH.

DATELINE: LATER! PLACELINE: ASGARDOPOLIS BEACH!
WHO-IT-IS-LINE: THOR'S OTHER BEST FRIEND BUT NOT MENTOR THIS TIME...SKURGE THE EXECUTIONER!
AND THE "EX" IN EXECUTIONER STANDS FOR... TO THE EXTREME!
ART THOU WATCHING, ENCHANTRESS?
NARRATIONLINE: BUT THE ENCHANTRESS IS TOO DISTRACTED TO REPLY...
I'M TOO DISTRACTED TO REPLY--FOR I AM LOST IN THOUGHTS OF HUNKY THOR!
SINCE HE EXPLAINED HOW ROXXON'S RISKMAXX TRADING APP MAKES BIG PROFITS FAST FOR YOU,* HE HATH HAUNTED MY DREAMS--YET HOW CAN I BETRAY SKURGE?
HA HA! WEEPING A HAPPY TEAR AT OUR DRAMA-FREE LOVE LIFE, I SEE!
*IN THE NOW-CLASSIC WEALTH WARS: SECRET OF THE MOOLA ONE-SHOT!
'TIS GOOD INDEED THAT MY HEART WON'T BE CRUSHED UTTERLY ANYTIME SOON!
-SOB!- SKURGE, THERE IS SOMETHING I MUST TELL THEE--
INTERRUPTIONLINE: BUT THEN!
ENCHANTRESS! EXECUTIONER! AS WELL AS THIS BEACH BALL, I BEAR NEWS!
HEIMDALL! I TOLD THEE, 'TIS OVER BETWEEN US--SINCE I CAUGHT THOU LOOKING AT OTHER WOMEN!

AS SENTRY OF THE RAINBOW SUPERHIGHWAY, I MUST GAZE UPON ALL POTENTIAL THREATS, AMORA--EVEN IF THEY BE TENS! BUT THE PAST IS NOT WHY I AM HERE!
FOR MY EYES HAVE SEEN NEITHER ENEMY NOR HOTTIE THIS DAY, BUT A FRIEND IN NEED! BEHOLD FOR YOURSELVES!
ROXXON
AYE! 'TIS I--THOR!
I SUSPECT MY EVIL BROTHER LOKI SPREADS HIS MISCHIEF ON EARTHGARD* EVEN NOW...BUT I MUST BE SURE THAT WHAT USUALLY HAPPENS IS HAPPENING YET AGAIN!
*EARTH.
CAN THY GODLY VISION AID ME...?
NAY, THOR! FOR EVEN A GOD MAY BE CURSED WITH HUMAN BIAS!
BETTER TO CONSULT ONE MORE OMNISCIENT THAN EVEN I...
...ROXXON ELIZA, THE A.I. ASSISTANT THAT CAN ANSWER ANYTHING THROUGH THE POWER OF PREDICTIVE TEXT!
ELIZA--IS IT LOKI THIS TIME?
Outlook Good
-BEEP!- OUTLOOK GOOD!
FOOL THAT I AM! I SHOULD HAVE GUESSED THAT ROXXON IS GREATER EVEN THAN GODS!
AND UNLIKE SELFISH LIVING BEINGS, AN APP ASKS FOR NEITHER PAY NOR CONDITIONS!
STILL, 'TIS GOOD THAT YOU CAME TO THY STALWART BROS WITH THIS DILEMMA, ODINSON...

"--FOR NOW WE MAY FACE LOKI AS ONE!"
LOCATION AGAIN: LOKI'S HIDDEN LAIR!
KROOOM
HIDDEN NO LONGER, WICKED ONE! HAVE AT THEE!
=EVIL GASP!= 'TIS THOR--AND THE BROSKIS THREE!
BUT HOW? MY MAGIC HID THIS FILTHY COMMUNE EVEN FROM HEIMDALL'S ALL-SEEING EYES!
AYE--BUT NOT FROM MY ALL-SMELLING NOSE!
AND YOUR ALLIES, LIKE ALL WHO PROTEST AGAINST UPSTANDING BUSINESS GENIUSES, DO NOT BATHE PROPERLY!
BY THE PITS OF MUSPELHEIM--THE PITS OF SMELLY HIPPIES ARE MY DOWNFALL!
DON'T WASTE WATER
A SHAME THEY DISDAIN THE GOOD PRODUCTS OF ROXXON, LOKI!
FOR ONLY ROXXON BODY GEL, SCENTED WITH ENGINE OIL AND HOT SAUCE, HATH EXFOLIATING MICROPLASTICS THAT KEEP EVEN A GOD FRESH, CLEAN AND READY FOR ACTION!
MMM! I'LL SAY!
ROXXON

BAH! YOU MAY HAVE THE GO-AHEAD SCENT OF THE MODERN MAN OF TODAY, THOR--BUT MY MATCHLESS CUNNING IS NOT TO BE SNIFFED AT!
QUICKLY, MY BRAINWASHED YET UNWASHED HORDES! PROTECT YOUR LEADER--AND DESTROY THOR! HEE HEE HEE!
BAN THOR
FIVE, SIX, SEVEN, EIGHT! THOR'S THE CREEP WE REALLY HATE!
MORE FOOL THEE, LOKI! FOR THOUGH THESE YOUTHS PERHAPS ONCE MEANT WELL IN THEIR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTESTATIONS--
NO TO THOR
--THEIR UNRULY CHANTING HATH MADE THEM WORSE THAN THE POLLUTION THEY OPPOSE!
NOT THAT POLLUTION IS A THING TO WORRY ABOUT! TASTE MJOLNIR PREMIUM, VILLAINS!
AUGH!
HEEE HEEE HEEE! YET MY PATHETIC DRONES HAVE BOUGHT ME PRECIOUS TIME--TO WEAVE MY MAGIC!
FACE THE ILLUSIONS OF LOKI, THOR--HE WHO HAS ALWAYS BEEN, AND WILL ALWAYS BE... THE GOD OF LIES!

OUR FOES-- REPLACED BY MONSTERS! EVEN MY GODLY GAZE CANNOT TELL WHERE ILLUSION ENDS AND OUR TRUE FOES BEGIN!
THERE IS ONLY ONE THING TO DO! FOLLOW ME, BOTH OF YOU!
FOR NOW--
--THOR MUST FIGHT ALONE!
MY ALLIES-- FLEEING IN MY TIME OF NEED?
IT CANNOT BE! AND YET, IT IS!
INDEED, MY BROTHER! AND NOW--MY SPELLS SHALL IMMERSE THEE FOREVER IN A FALSE WORLD!
NO! 'TIS A LIE, FOUL LOKI! IT IS NOT WHAT SHOULD BE!
THIS IS NOT--
THIS IS NOT WHO I AM.
THOR?
CAN YOU HEAR ME, THOR?
ROXXON PRESENTS
THOR
THE ROXXON AGE OF COMIX BEGINS!

CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING.

I WANTED TO ROTATE *INTO* THIS... *EXPERIENCE*...FOR JUST A MOMENT. TO SPEAK TO YOU *DIRECTLY*.
THE COMIC IS *SELF-PARODY*, OF COURSE. BUT PARODY IS AN EFFECTIVE *WEAPON* IN THESE TIMES.
A BRAND THAT TAKES ITSELF SERIOUSLY IS *MOCKED*-- A BRAND THAT MOCKS *ITSELF* HAS *FREE REIN*. A FREE *PASS* INTO EVERY CONSUMER'S HEAD.
SCREENSHOT THE CHEESY ADVERTISEMENTS. TURN THEM INTO *MEMES*. MAKE THEM *VIRAL*, A DISEASE THAT NESTS INSIDE YOU. MAKE THEM *HARMLESS*.
WE CAN *LAUGH* TOGETHER, CAN'T WE? WE'RE SUCH GOOD *FRIENDS*--HOW COULD YOU DO *WITHOUT* US?
WE ARE *ALLOWED* TO PLAY-- TO BE IN ON OUR OWN JOKE. BECAUSE IN THE END, THE JOKE IS ON *YOU*. THE JOKE *IS* YOU.
AND WE'LL TELL IT UNTIL IT EATS YOU ALIVE.
UNDERSTAND? YOU'RE A JOKE NOW, THOR. A *STUPID, PATHETIC* JOKE...
THOR
#1
ROXXON
R
NO!
THIS IS *NOT* WHO I--
THOR!

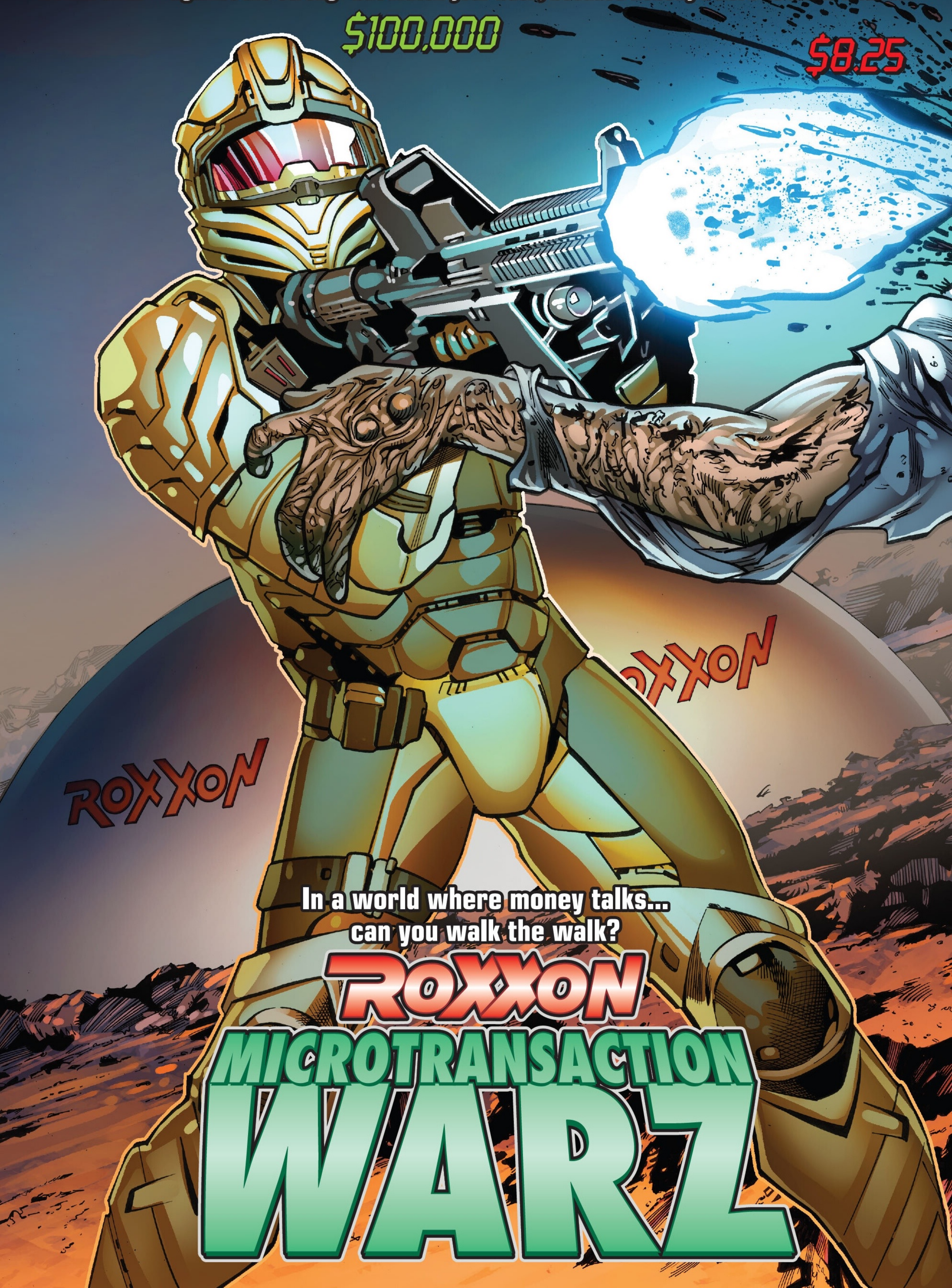
WE HAVE RETURNED! QUICKLY--WEAR THESE!
A PAIR OF ROXXSPEXX? ROXXON'S OWN ALTERNATE-REALITY GOGGLES...?
AYE-- AND SET IN REVERSE!
OF COURSE! ONLY THE INCREDIBLE POWER OF ROXXSPEXX CAN CORRECT FOR LOKI'S ALTERNATE REALITY!
BAH!
AND SHOW THE TRUE ONE-- IN AWESOME 8K! YOU'VE NEVER BEEN CRISPER, MY EVIL BROTHER--
--EXCEPT, PERHAPS, WHEN I FRY THEE WITH THIS BOLT OF LIGHTNING!
AWK!
KRAKOOOM
GOOD WORK, THOR! AND THE AMAZING CONNECTIVITY OF ROXXSPEXX CAN DO EVEN MORE THAN THAT--FOR ONLY $899.99!
YOU CALLED YOUR FOLLOWERS DRONES, LOKI--

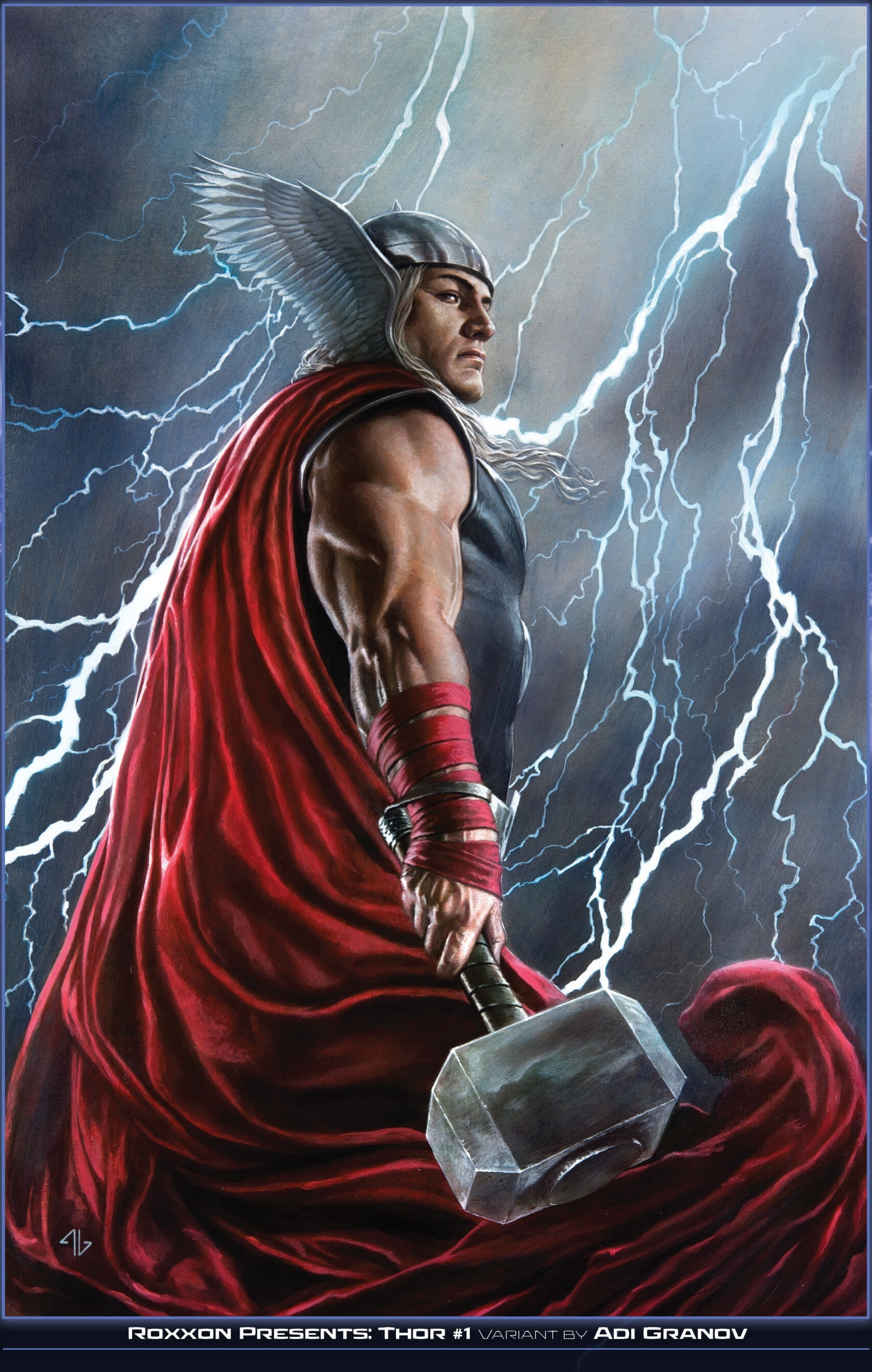
--LET US SEE HOW THEY FARE AGAINST AN ASSAULT BY ROXXON'S PERSONAL CROWD-CONTROL DRONES!
FIRING 200 ROXXON-BRAND "NOT-QUITE-LETHAL" TASER ROUNDS PER SECOND--ALL FULLY LEGAL FOR PERSONAL DEFENSE ON THE HIGHWAY!*
*SUPREME COURT JUDGMENT PENDING.
HA HA! THOU ART MERCIFUL INDEED, SKURGE--
--THOUGH THESE VICIOUS HOODLUMS HAVE SURELY EARNED WORSE THAN A PLAYFUL 1000-VOLT SHOCK OR SEVERAL!
BUT AS FOR THEE, LOKI--A SPELL OF TORTURE IN ASGARD'S DUNGEONS SHALL BE THY REWARD!
I SHALL PREPARE THE BOILING VENOM AT ONCE!
TORTURE?

DATELINE: SHORTLY AFTERWARD...
ONCE AGAIN, MY BROTHER HAS BEEN FOILED, FATHER ODIN...
...AND YET, SOMETHING TROUBLES ME!
WERE "THE KIDS" CORRECT? DOTH ROXXON NOT DO ALL IN ITS POWER TO PROTECT THE GOOD EARTH*...?
THE PATH OF A HERO IS OFTEN A TROUBLED ONE, MY SON! BUT THERE IS ONE WHO MAY PERHAPS CONVINCE YOU...
*GARD.
MINOTAUR, MY FRIEND! AND OD'S BLOOD--'TIS GAEA, MY MOTHER!
YES, MY SON--AND YOU MUST HAVE PATIENCE! IF CHANGE IS NECESSARY, IT MUST COME SLOWLY... LEST THE MORTAL WORLD BECOME TOO MUCH A PARADISE!
FOR WHAT WOULD MANKIND BE SHOULD THEIR ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT EVER FAIL THEM?
$
AND ON THAT NOTE... A LITTLE BONUS FOR "CHAD HAMMER" FOR TODAY'S WORK!
OFF THE BOOKS, OF COURSE!
Wink
HA HA! NOW THAT'S THE KIND OF "GREEN POLICY" I LIKE!
SO MOTE IT BE, THOR... SO MOTE IT BE!
THE ROXXIN' END!

DO YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKE$?

Because after The Event™, the more you have, the longer you'll last. Start with nothing as a hapless victim--or spend ROXXBUXX™ on devastating weapons, customized armor and the gems you'll need to survive. Form elite clans to steal resources from the weak and defend your ROXXDOME™ against the strong--but watch your back, because nobody's here to make friends.


$100,000
$8.25
ROXXON
ROXXON
In a world where money talks...
can you walk the walk?
ROXXON
MICROTRANSACTION
WARZ

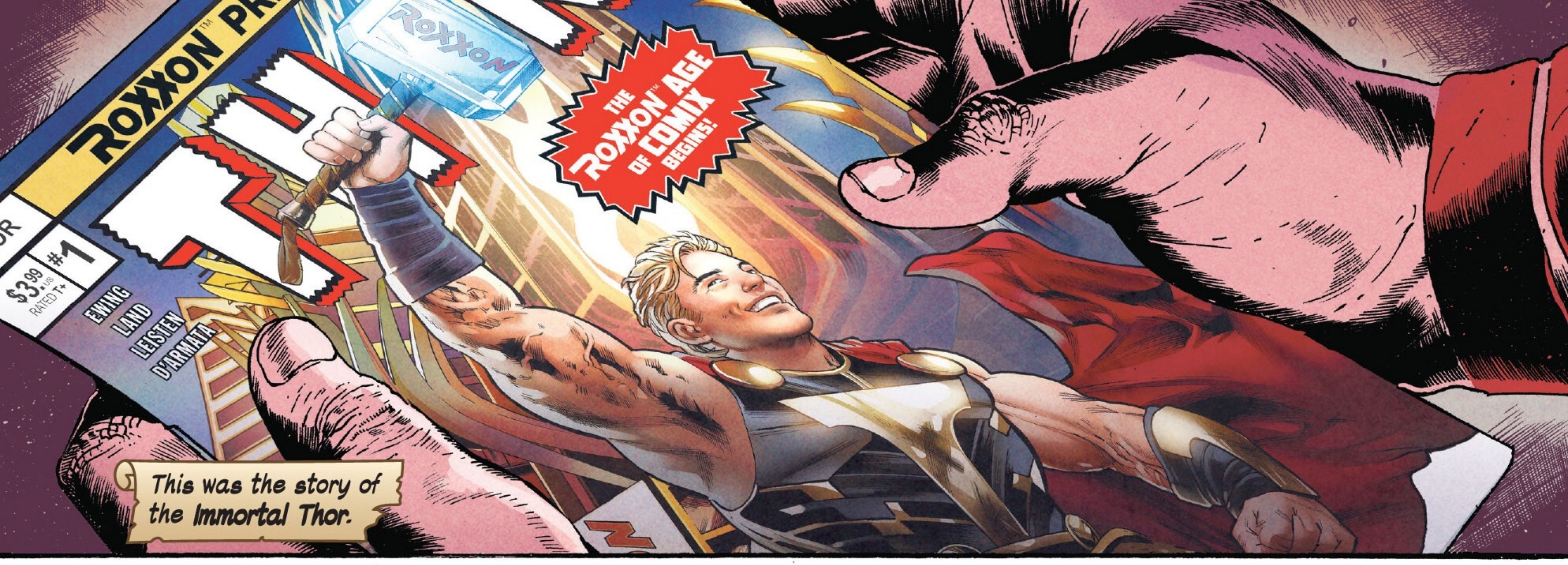


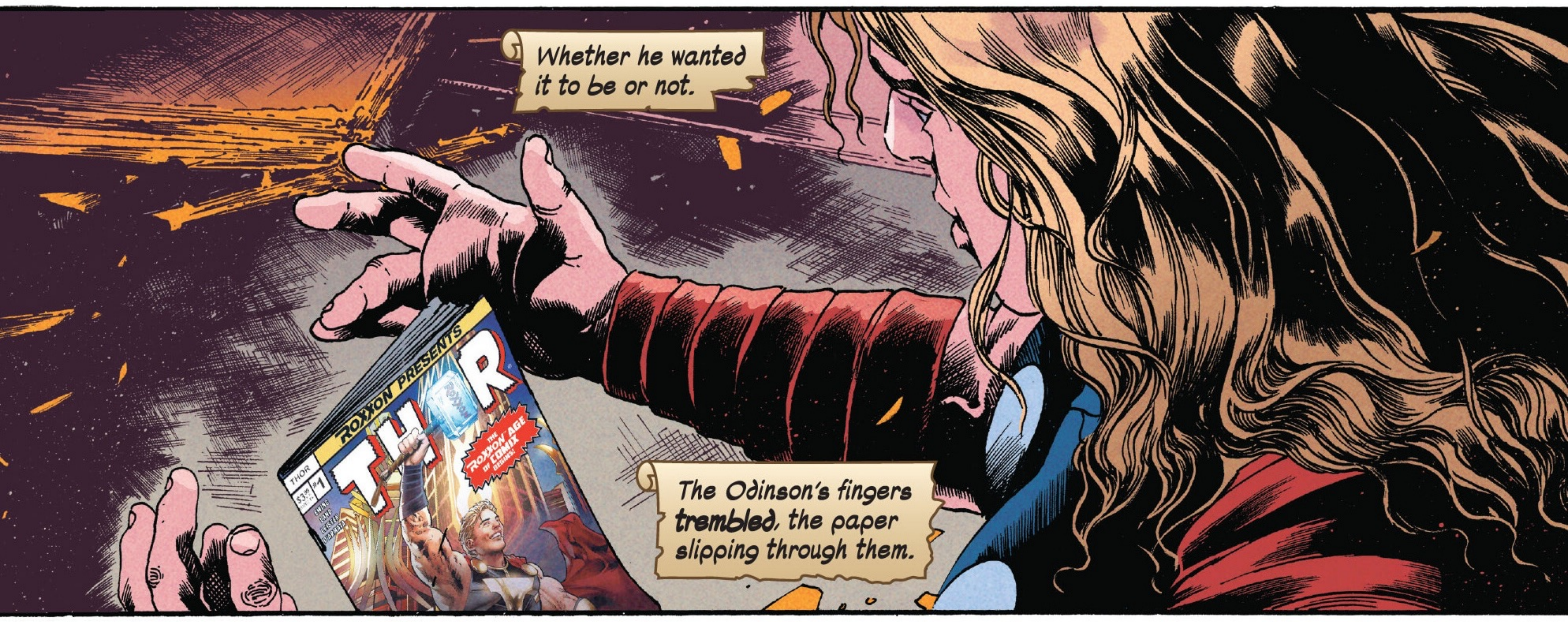
Roxxon Presents: Thor #1 Variant by **Adi Granov**

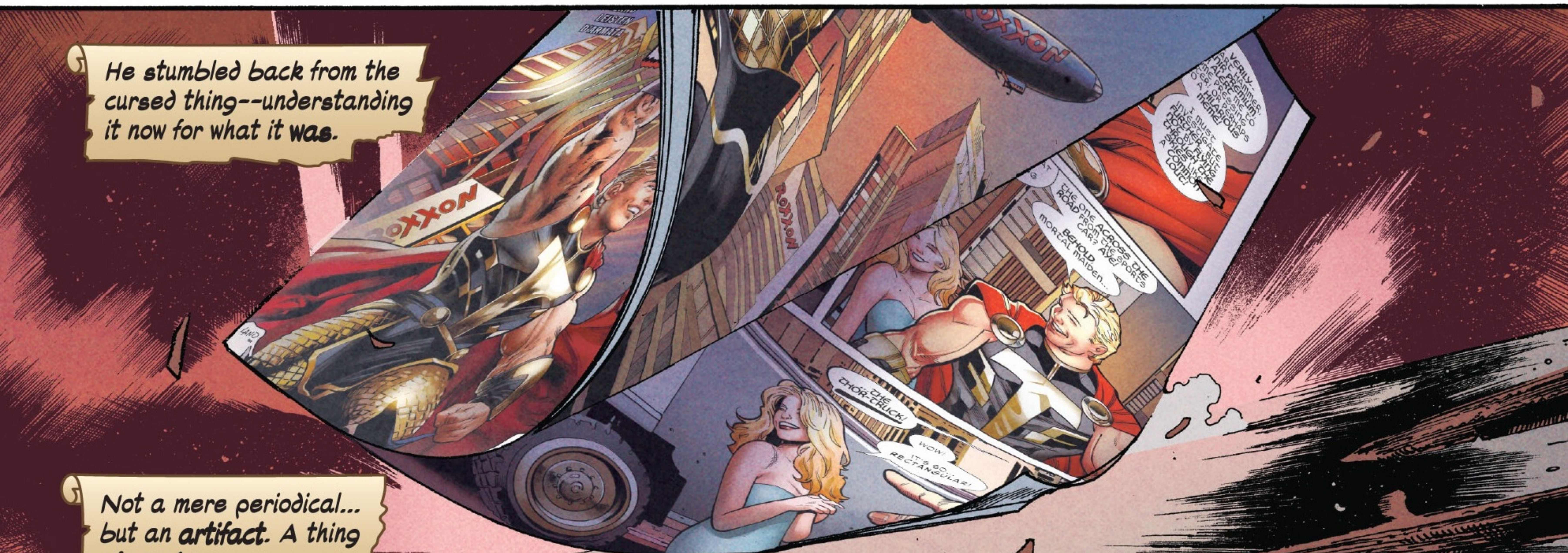
10

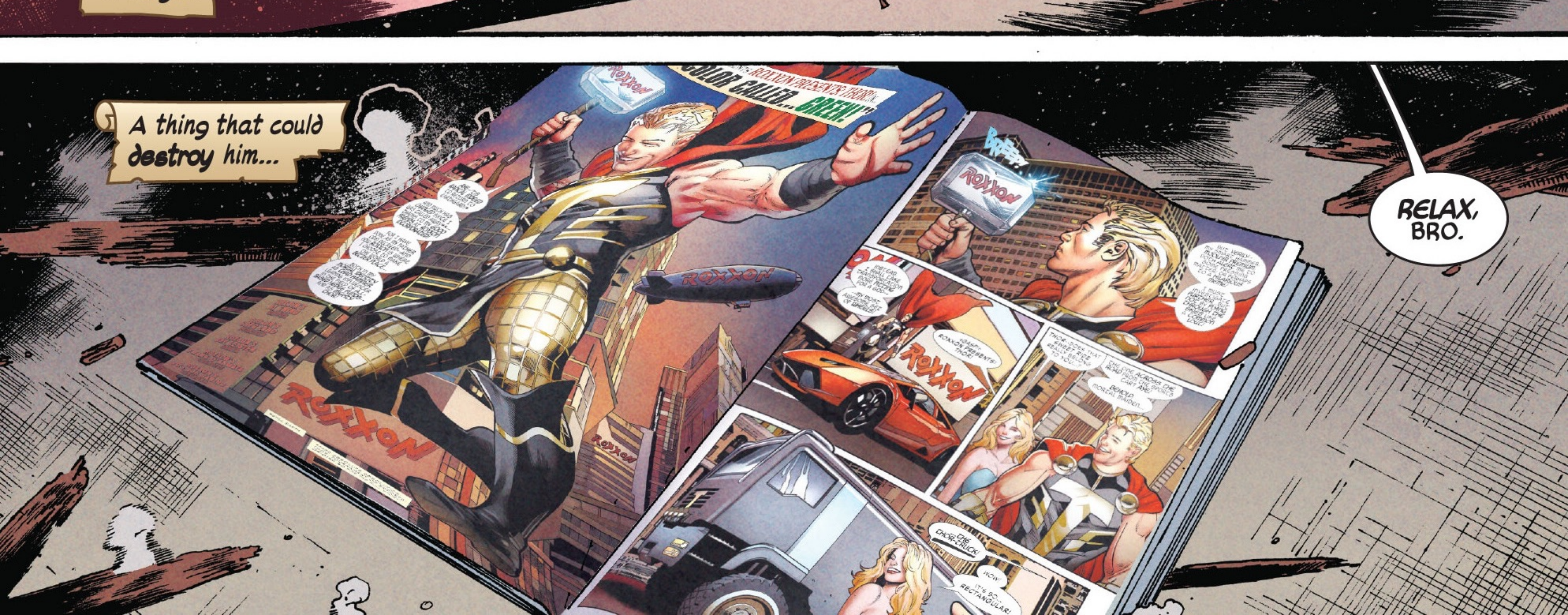
“CATTLE DIE, KINDRED DIE, WE OURSELVES ALSO DIE; BUT I KNOW ONE THING THAT NEVER DIES—JUDGMENT ON EACH ONE DEAD.”

–“THE HIGH ONE’S LAY,”
THE ELDER EDDAS OF SAEMUND SIGFUSSON


ROXXON PR
THOR
#1
$3.99 RATED T+
EWING
LAND
LEISTEN
D'ARMATA
THE ROXXON AGE OF COMIX BEGINS!
This was the story of the Immortal Thor.


Whether he wanted it to be or not.
ROXXON PRESENTS
THOR
The Odinson's fingers **trembled**, the paper slipping through them.


He stumbled back from the cursed thing--understanding it now for what it **was**.
Not a mere periodical... but an **artifact**. A thing of **magic**.


A thing that could **destroy** him...
RELAX, BRO.

...and make him anew.
GO GET SOME REST. I'LL TAKE OVER FROM HERE.
ROXXON
"HATE IS A COLOR CALLED... GREEN!"

CAN'T THINK.
I CAN'T THINK PROPERLY.
WHAT... ARE YOU...?
I'M THOR, STUPID.
DUH.
MY OWN THOUGHTS BABBLE AT ME.
"KEEP ON THINKING THAT."
I HAVE MY GADGETS, MY THOR-TRUCK, MY HAMMER, MJOLNIR PREMIUM.
ALL THOR'S COOL STUFF.
"YOU CAN KEEP IT." ODIN HELP ME.
ALL I CAN THINK...IS BANTER.
AND WHAT DO YOU HAVE?
NOTHING.
NO MEANING. NO SUBSTANCE... OR IS THERE?
THOR-TRUCK. "KEEP ON TRUCKIN'." FIND THE MEANING, ODINSON.
"KEEP IT TOGETHER."
YOU'RE NOTHING.
NOTHING WORTH BUYING.
"KEEP." KEEP.
KEEP.
YOU'RE THE KEEP.

ENCHANTRESS' FETCH. HER FAMILIAR. THE MAN OF HER DREAMS.
SKURGE WAS...WAS LOST TO AMORA...SO SHE MADE A SUBSTITUTE...
BUT THE EXECUTIONER'S BACK NOW, SO DEAR LITTLE KEEP NEEDED A NEW PERSONA...AND "THE ROXXIN' THOR" NEEDED A PHYSICAL FORM.
STILL-- THAT'S VERY GOOD, THOR. YOU'RE SO SMART.
ISN'T HE SMART, BOYS? I THINK THAT'S MY FAULT.
A LITTLE TOO MUCH PARODY IN THE WRITING STYLE...AND PARODY HAS TO BE KNOWING.
I'LL CORRECT THAT FOR ISSUE #2, DARIO.
NO NEED TO RUSH IT. IF THOR'S SMART ENOUGH TO KNOW HE'S DOOMED... THAT'S A PLUS.
PLAY YOUR GAMES. I WILL WIN THEM.
IN THE END, ALL YOU HAVE IS A FALSE THOR, HOLDING A FALSE MJOLNIR...
THAT'S MJOLNIR PREMIUM.
Roxxon

ROXXON
WHOOMMM
"WELL, THAT JUST HAPPENED."
KROOMM
"THAT'S GONNA LEAVE A MARK."
THE KEEP... THE KEEP WAS ALWAYS STRONG... AND NOW, WITH THIS MAGIC IN HIM...
HOW CAN I BEAT HIM? WITHOUT AN ORIGINAL THOUGHT IN MY HEAD...HOW CAN I...?
"HE'S BEHIND ME, ISN'T HE?"
LOOK AT YOU.

OUT OF STYLE, OUT OF DATE, OUT OF TOUCH...AND CLEARLY NOT A PRIORITY FOR THE COMPANY.
WHEREAS I'M A FRESH, NEW NUMBER ONE. A TOP SELLER PUSHED BY A GLOBAL BRAND.
GO BACK TO ASGARD, YOUR MAJESTY. SIT ON YOUR THRONE. MAKE YOUR PROCLAMATIONS.
GROW FAT IN YOUR RETIREMENT.
YOU...!
YOU.
CAN'T THINK BEYOND CLICHÉS. SO...USE THAT. EMBRACE IT. DON'T THINK, THUNDER GOD.
FEEL.
I'M THE THOR OF THIS WORLD NOW.
THE TRUE SON OF MIDGARD... THIS PATHETIC, PLASTIC WORLD...
...
"WHAT DID YOU SAY ABOUT MY MOTHER?"

KRAKATHOOOMMMM
AAAHHH!
AMORA!
HELP ME!

OH DEAR.
THE KEEP IS LOSING FACE.
IS THAT GOING TO BE A PROBLEM?
CERTAIN ASSURANCES WERE MADE, AMORA--
LET HER WORK, MINOTAUR.
HATE IS A COLOR CALLED...GREEN!
LITTLE IMAGE.
LITTLE IMAGE, DANCE FOR ME.
DANCE AS A FLAME--AND BURN FOR ME, LIKE ALL MY LOVERS.
AND AS YOU BURN...BE FUEL. A SECRET FIRE.
ROXXON PRESENTS
THOR
BE POWER.

AND FLY TO MY *CREATION*.
THERE, *THAT* WILL FIX THE KEEP IN HIS THOR-FORM--BY MAKING HIM THE *LOCUS OF THE SPELL*. THE *FOCAL POINT*.
HMM.
AND IF THOR *DESTROYS* THE KEEP?
CAN THAT BREAK THE SPELL?
IF HE DOES...THE THOR-FORM IS FIXED *FAST*.
BUT THOR'S THE *MERCIFUL* SORT. NOT THE TYPE TO TAKE A LIFE IN *ANGER*--EVEN A HALF-LIFE LIKE THE *KEEP'S*...
...ASSUMING SOME DARK FORCE HASN'T ADDLED HIS *WITS*, OF COURSE.
THEN ALL BETS ARE OFF.
POOR KEEP.
BUT SO IT GOES. SOMETIMES YOU HAVE TO MAKE A FEW LITTLE *SACRIFICES*.
AND IT'S BETTER IF THOSE LITTLE SACRIFICES ARE THE *LITTLE* PEOPLE.
BUSINESS IS *CUTTHROAT* AT ITS CORE, AFTER ALL--AND *SOMEBODY'S* GOT TO BE--
--AT THE SHARP END.
So it goes.

And so it went.
"Time for round two."
You can feel it *too*, can't you?
Be silent--
Mistress came *through*. She's lent me *power*--power that gives me the *advantage* between us.
You see, I'm a clean, *simple* concept--and you're a *mess*. Look at all you have to *be*--a wise *king*, a kind *brother*, a noble *hero*.
I just have to be *strong*.
I just have to be *Thor!*
And I am Thor!
"I know you are."
"But what am I?"
Batter *up*.
ROXXON
CLANGG

WHOKK
n-no...
I AM...
ROXXON
WHAMM
HOLY CRAP, IS THAT THOR...?
YES.
YES, I AM.
ROXXON

THEN STAND, THOR.
STAND, IF YOU WOULD BEAR THE WEIGHT OF MY NAME AS OTHERS HAVE.
STAND, AS THEY DID, WITH YOUR HAMMER IN YOUR HAND.
STAND, AS THEY DID...
...AND LOOK DEATH IN THE EYE!
OH NO.
DUDE.
I GOTTA GET THIS ON ROXX LIVE.

AS PREDICTED.
HE'S MAKING A ***SPECTACLE*** OF IT.
NOT THE ***BEST*** PLAN... BUT ***I*** CAN'T TALK. I DON'T PLAN ***EITHER.***
I JUST ***EXECUTE.***
WHAT'S OUR NEXT STEP?
IT'S ***MY*** SHOW FROM HERE, DARLING.
THE ***TRICKY*** PART IS RESTRUCTURING ***MORTAL MEMORIES...***
...BUT I ONLY NEED TO PLANT MYSELF IN A ***HANDFUL***-- TO ***BEGIN*** WITH, AT LEAST.
MOST OF THE EMPLOYEES WILL JUST ASSUME THEY MISSED A ***MEMO.***
HELLO? THIS IS ***ASTRID MORA***-- YES, THE NEW ***VICE PRESIDENT.*** I'M IN MR. ***AGGER'S*** OFFICE.
NO, THOR... THOR JUST ***LEFT.*** PLEASE-- ARE ***SECURITY*** ON THEIR WAY UP?
TELL THEM TO ***HURRY.***
SOMETHING ***DREADFUL'S*** HAPPENED.

IS THAT FEAR IN YOUR VOICE, THOR?
S-STAY BACK.
I'M WARNING YOU...
YOU ARE NO DOUBLE OF ME THEN--NOR EVEN OF PROUD SKURGE. OUR VOICES DO NOT TREMBLE SO.
PERHAPS IT IS I WHO SHOULD WARN YOU, KEEP.
HERE.
MY WARNING SHOT.

WHOA.
THIS IS BRUTAL...
Y-YOU HAVE YOUR MJOLNIR.
I HAVE MINE! MJOLNIR PREMIUM!
FEEL ITS POWER NOW!
"LET'S NOT AND SAY WE DID."
WHAPP
"THAT'S NOT A HAMMER..."
ROXXON
MJOLNIR? TO ME.
KRRUNCH
"...THIS IS A HAMMER."

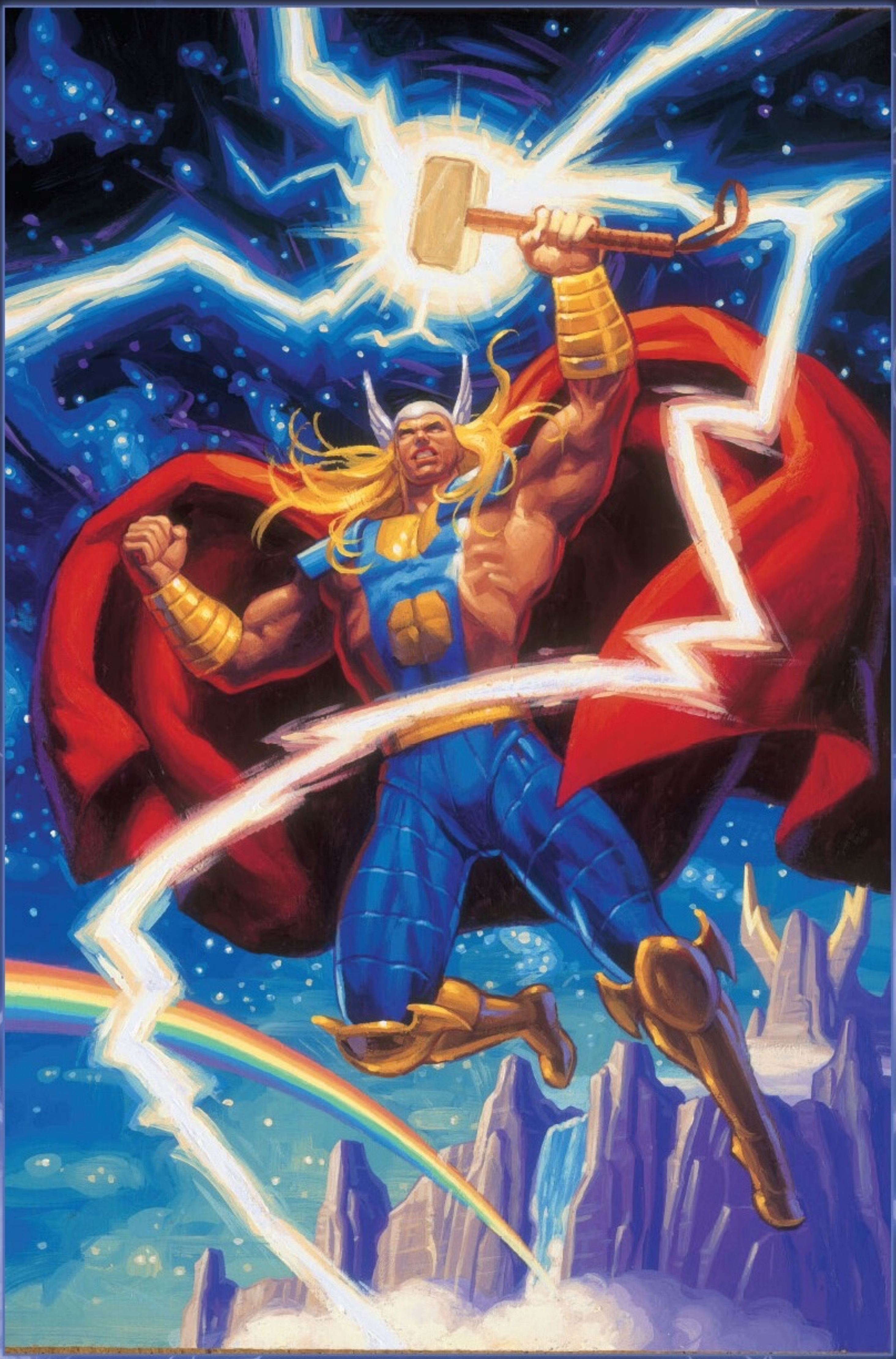
I--I AM THOR! THE CANONICAL THOR!
I AM THE OFFICIALLY LICENSED THOR--
"LIKE HELL."
AS I SAID-- OTHERS HAVE TAKEN MY NAME, CREATURE.
YOUR USE OF IT DISHONORS THEM--AND THAT, I WILL NOT STAND! SO LET THE WORLD SEE THE TRUE FORM OF ENCHANTRESS' PUPPET!
COME, MY GREAT SERVANT! HEED THE WORDS OF THY TRUE LORD AND LIEGE!
BRROOOM!!!
DON'T.
TOO LATE TO BEG.
COME, THE STORM! COME IN THY FULL FURY-- IN THE FULL MEASURE OF MY POWER!
FOR THOR ALL-FATHER GIVES YOU FULL PERMISSION--
--TO BURN THIS PRETENDER AWAY!
KRAKADOOM!!!

'TIS DONE...
HOLY CRAP.
THOR JUST KILLED THOR!
LIVE ON STREAM!
NOT SO, MY FRIEND. THIS IS THE KEEP--A BEING OF MAGIC WHO CANNOT TRULY DIE.
SEE FOR YOURSELF--FOR IN ANOTHER MOMENT, HE WILL SHED THIS DISGUISE.
Any moment now.
YET STILL HE LIES. SHAPED AS A MORTAL, AND DEAD AT MY HAND...
"DID I DO THAT?"
MY BRAIN STILL BUZZES WITH NONSENSE. I MUST PONDER THIS ON ASGARD.
BUT WITH THE FALSE THOR'S END, PERHAPS I CAN THINK ENOUGH TO RECLAIM...
TORMOD!
TO--

THAPP
--ME.
... DID THE MURDER WEAPON JUST FLY OUT OF THE WINDOW?
Ms. Astrid Mora, vice president of Roxxon, made no reply.
But she smiled, out of sight, as her plans bore their fruit...
...and the trap around Thor closed.

...
"IT'S NOT WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE."

GETTING THE AX



6 MARVEL MASTERPIECES VARIANT BY
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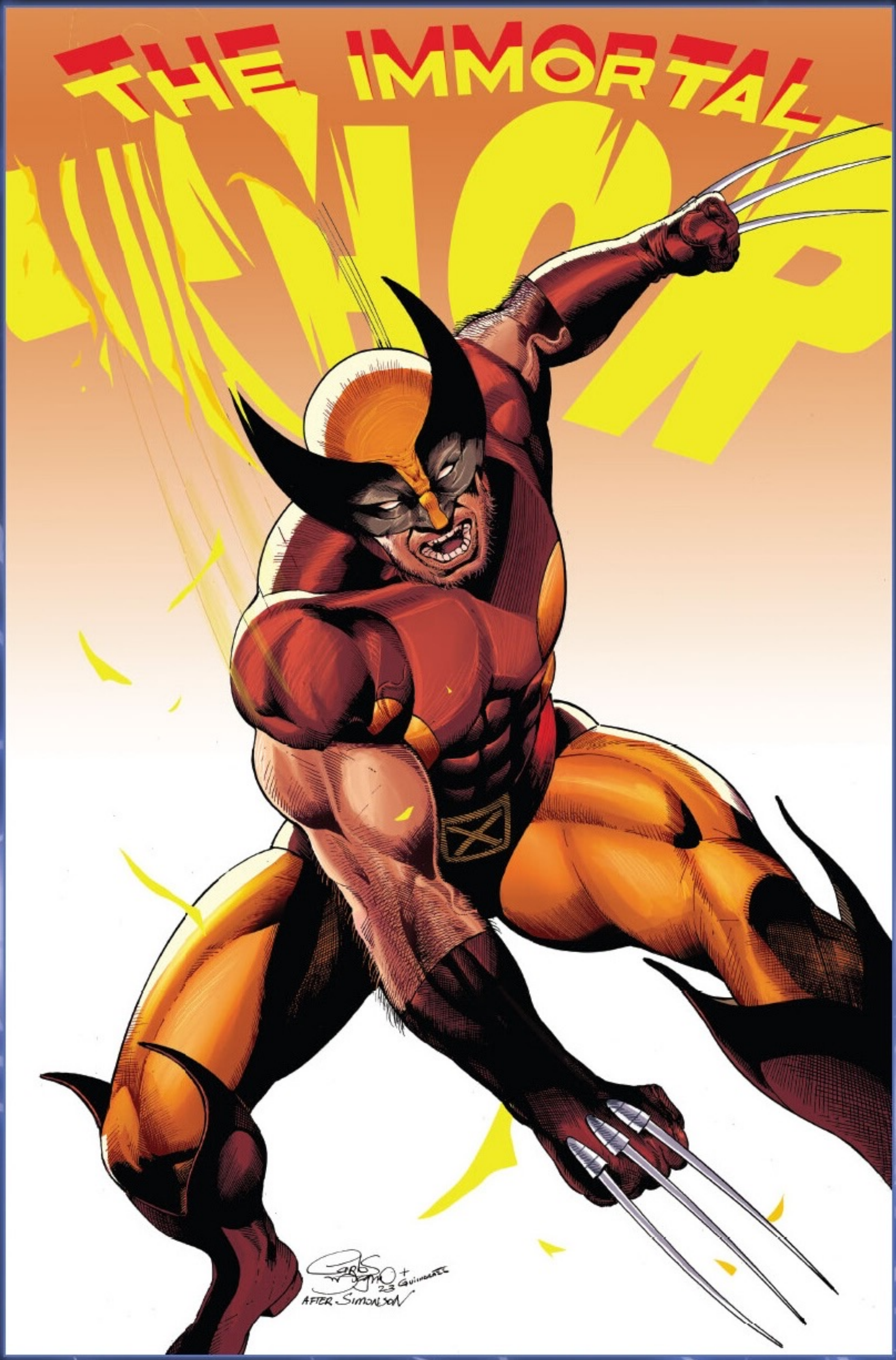

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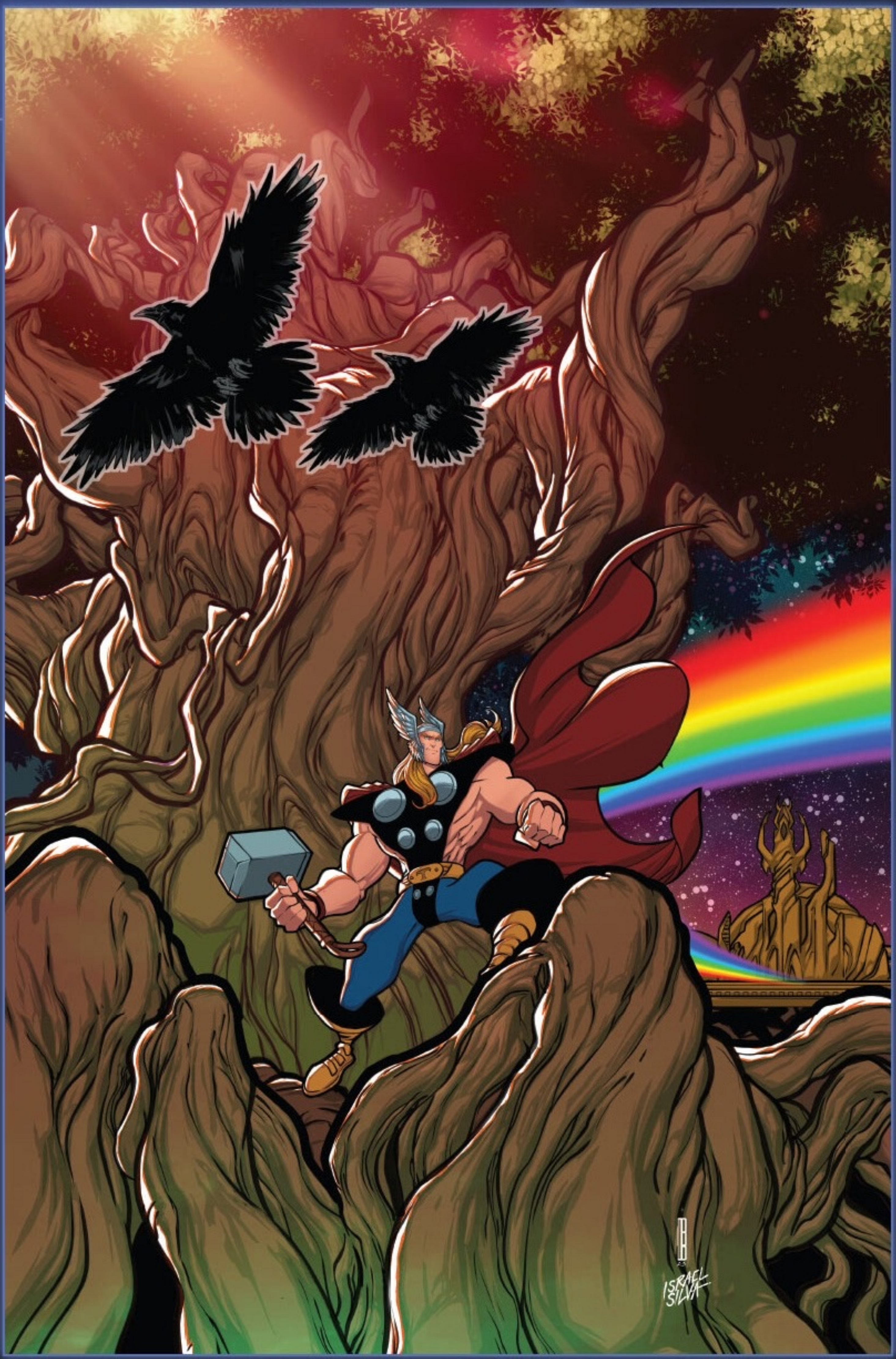
CARLOS MAGNO & ALEX GUIMARÃES



7 MARVEL '97 VARIANT BY
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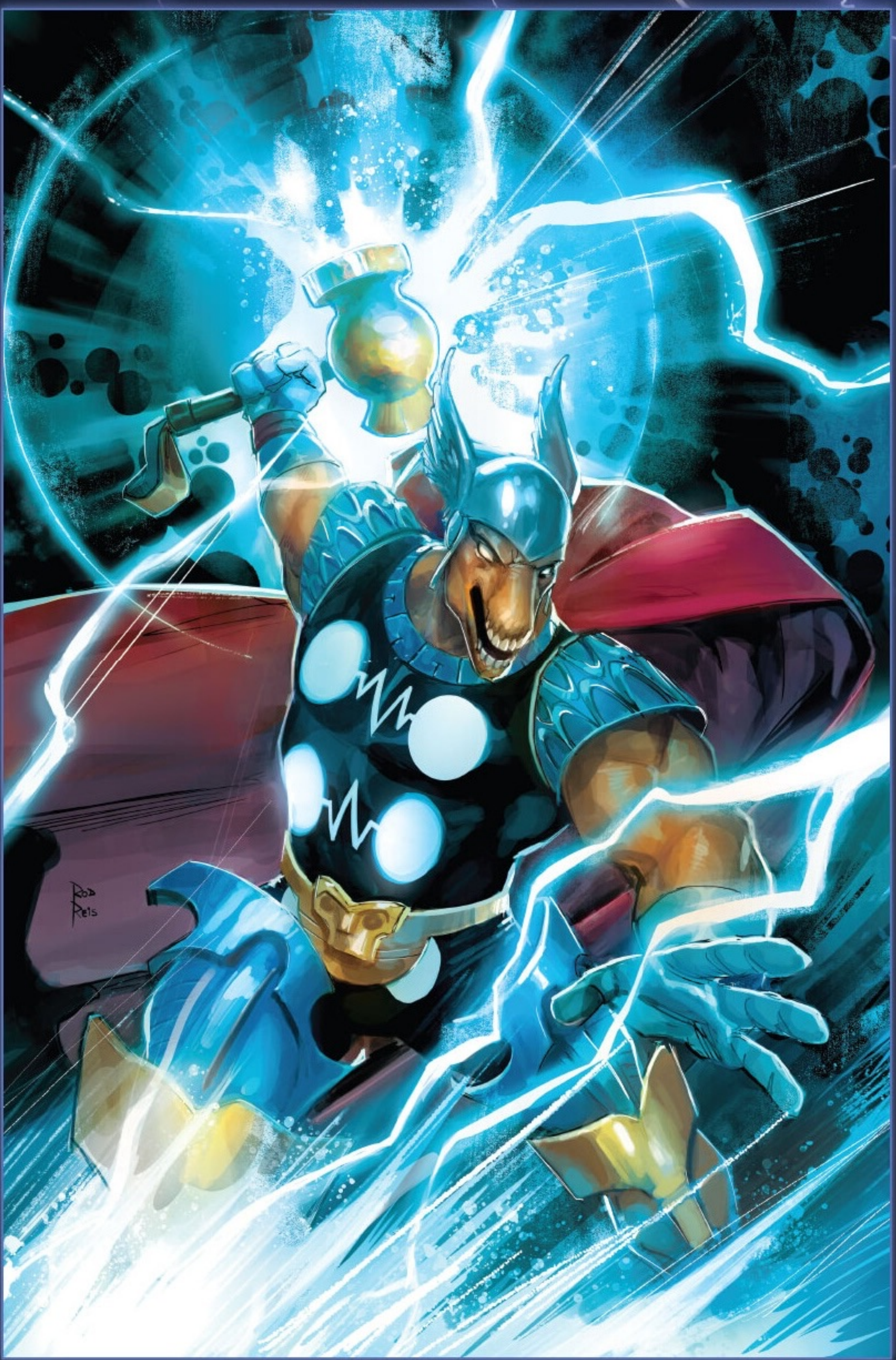

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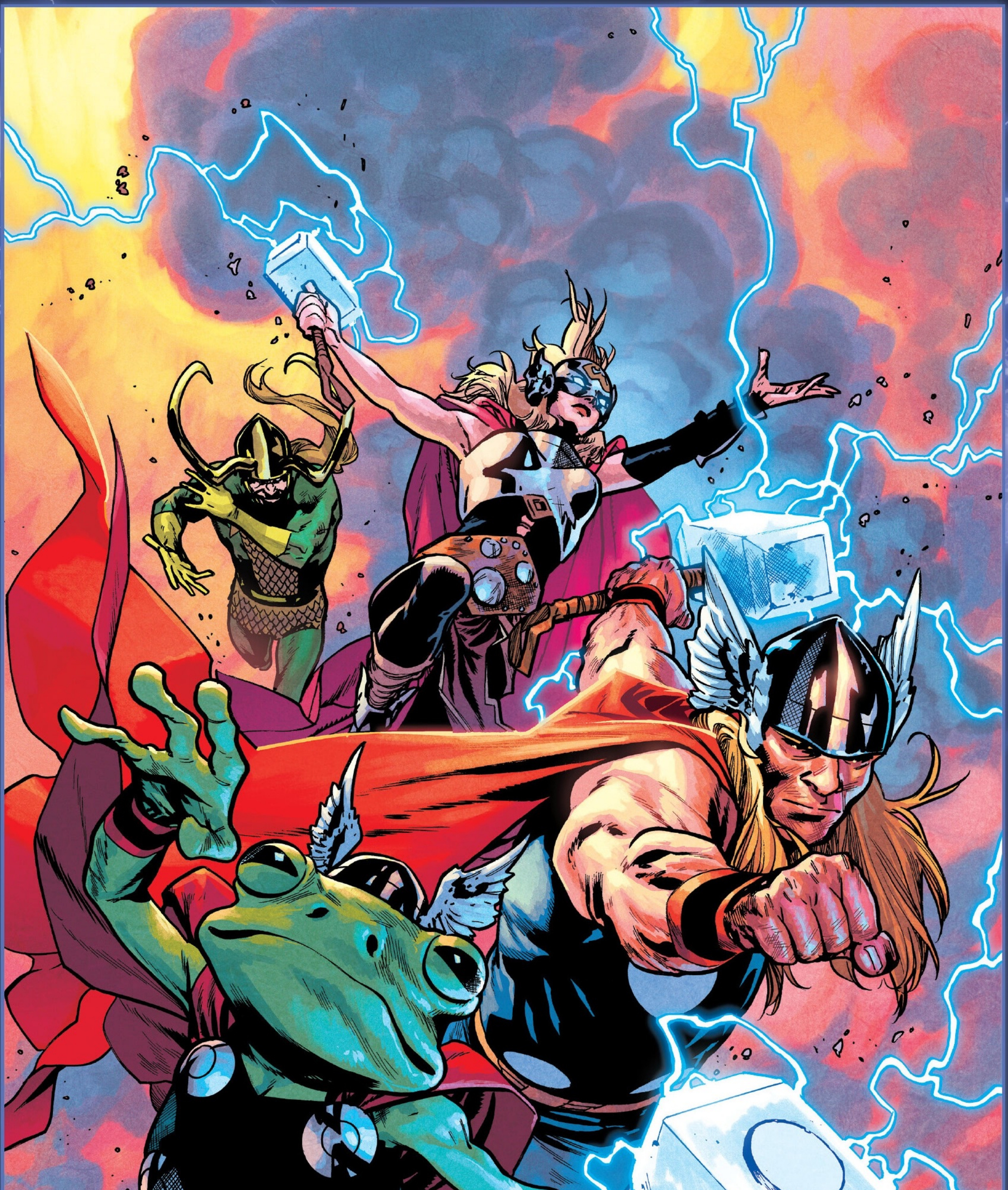

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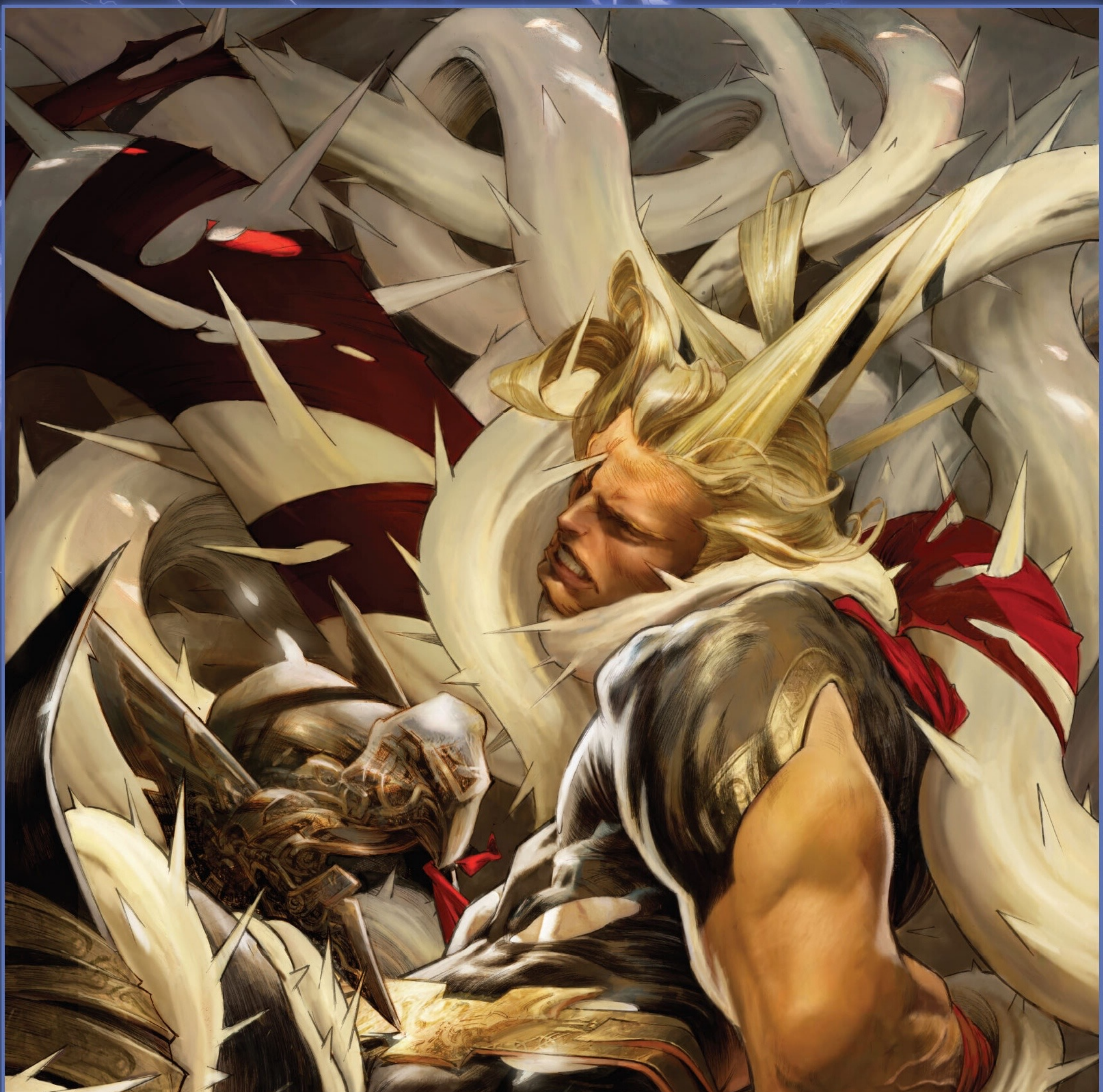

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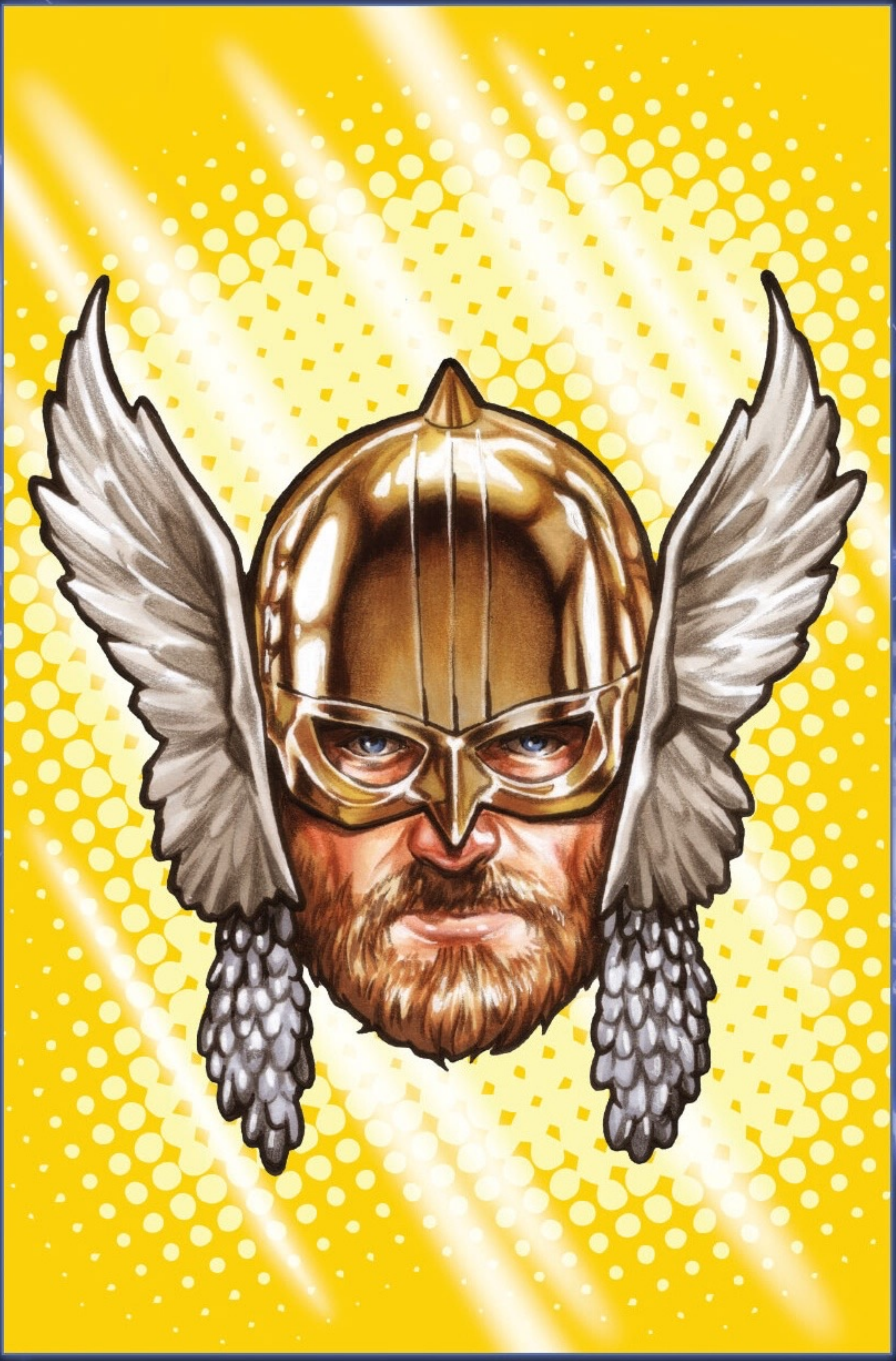

8 Headshot Variant by
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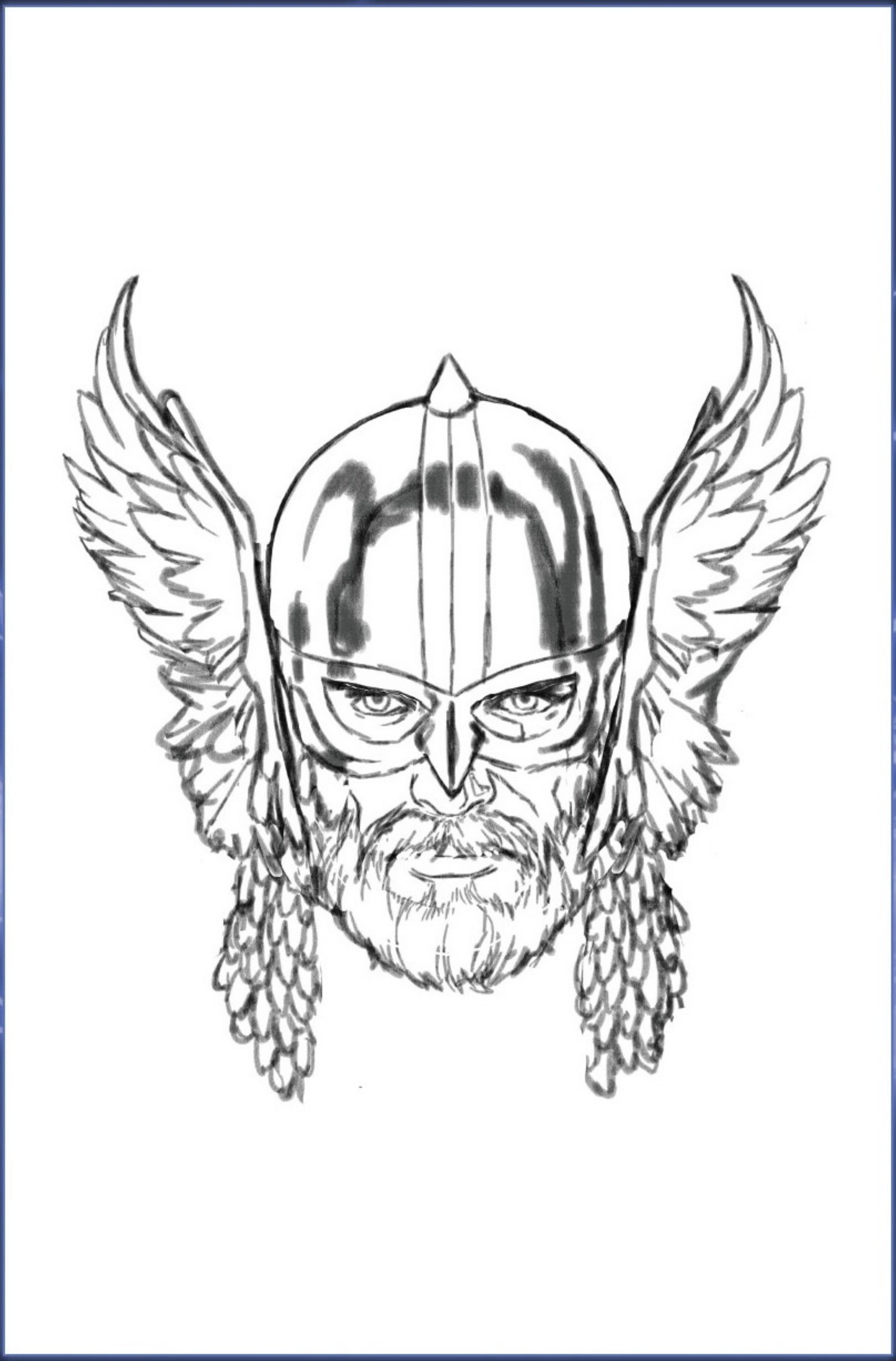

8 Headshot Sketch Variant by
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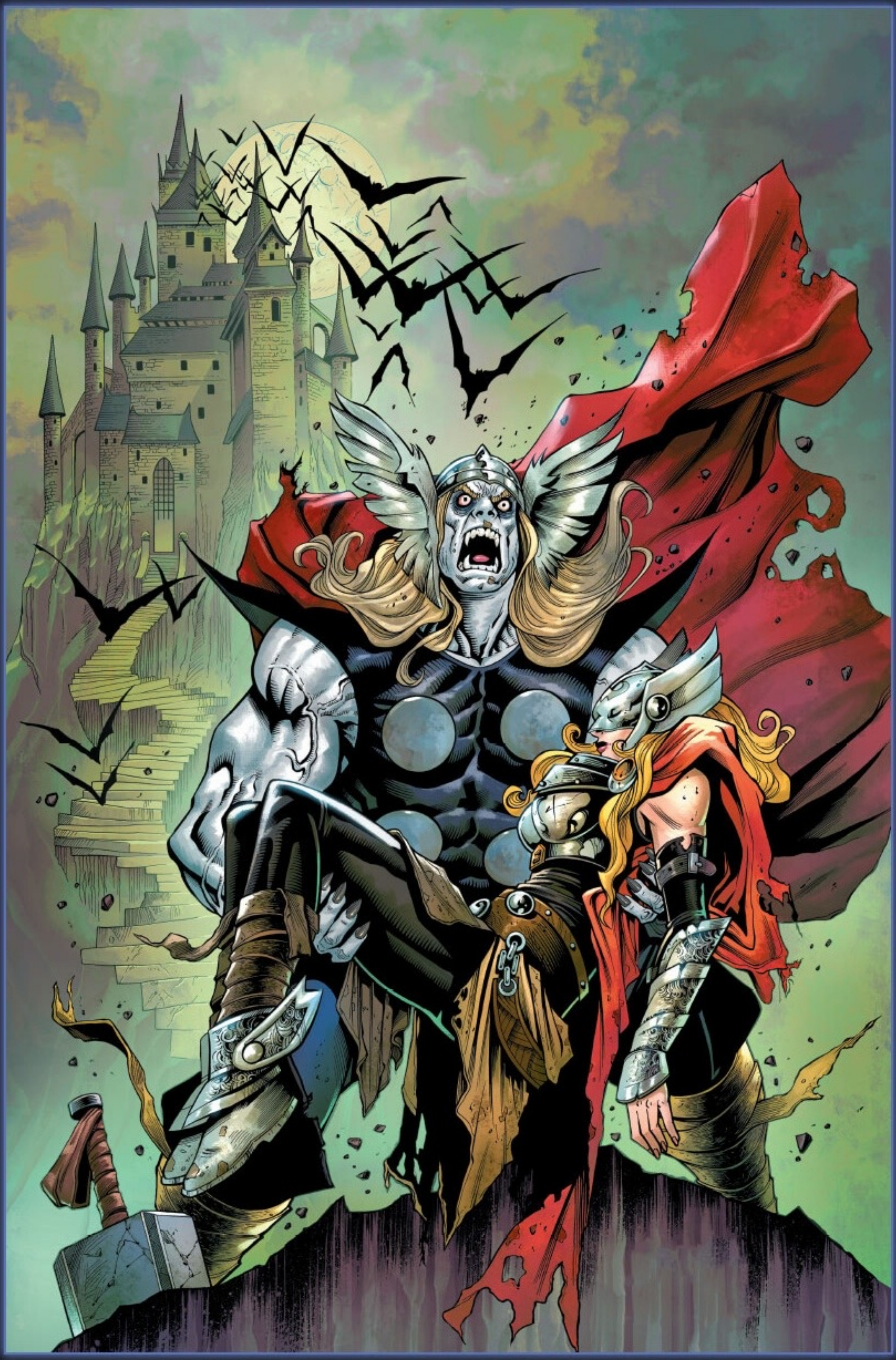

9 Vampire Variant by
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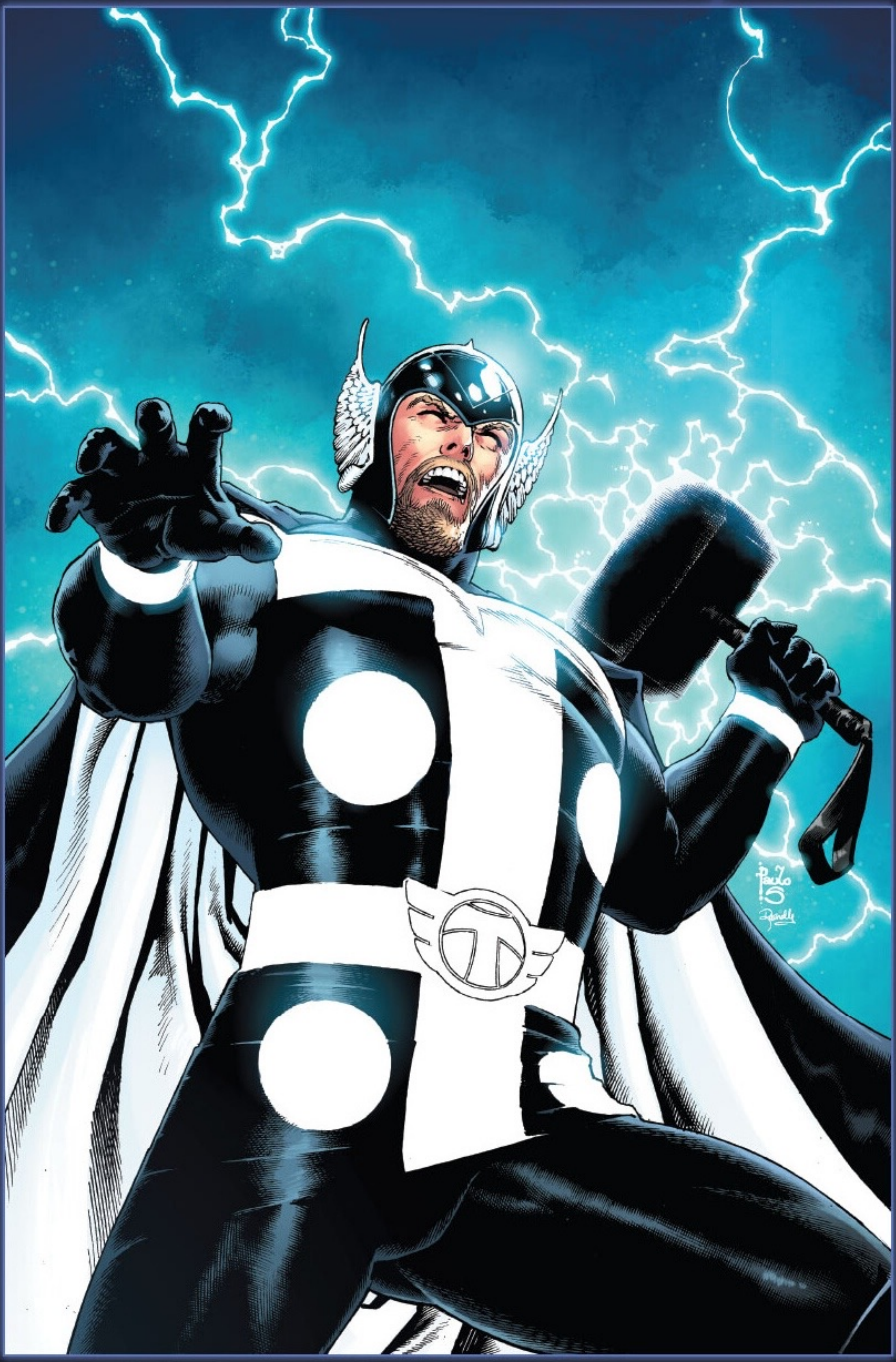
& **Arif Prianto**



10 Black Costume Variant by
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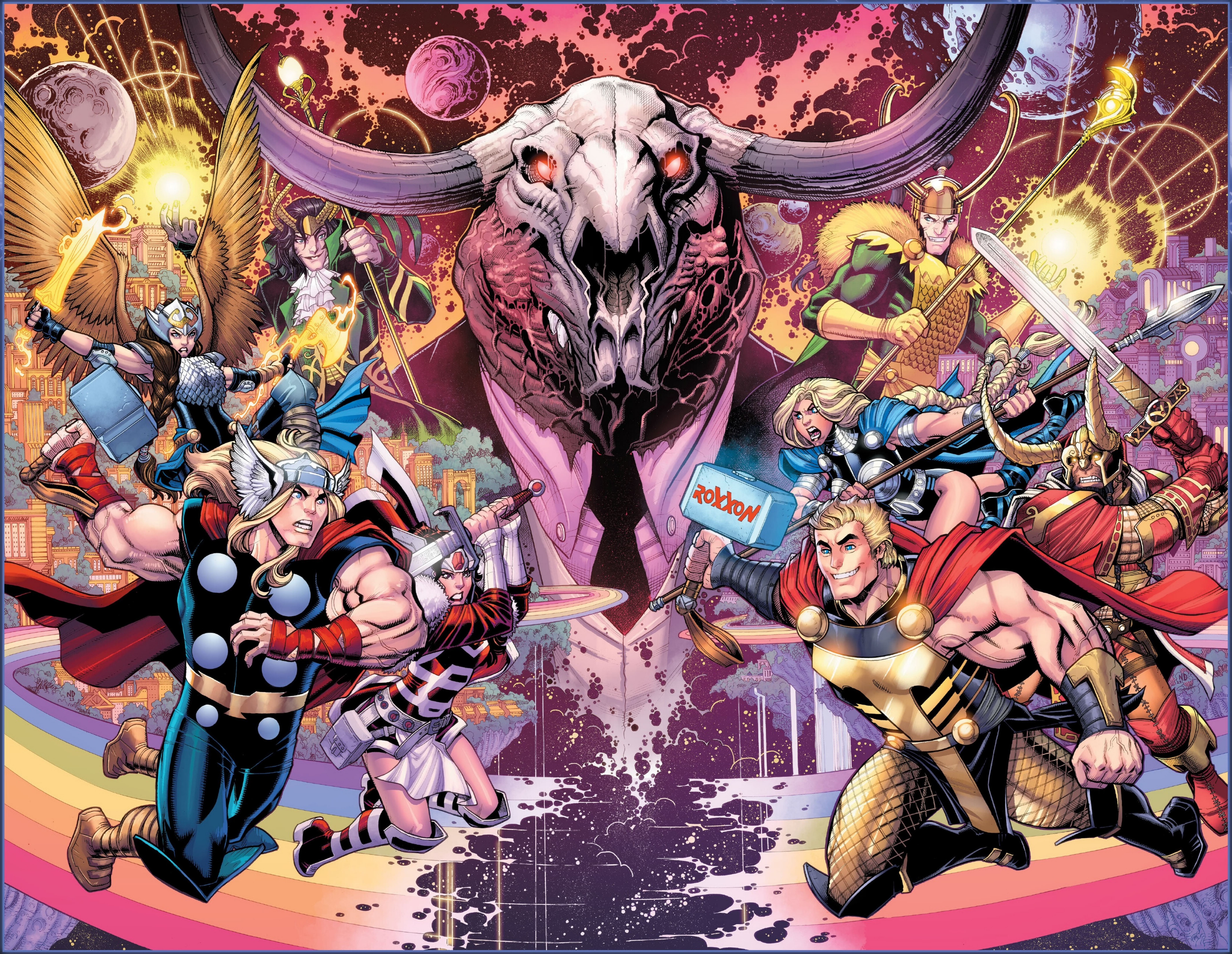
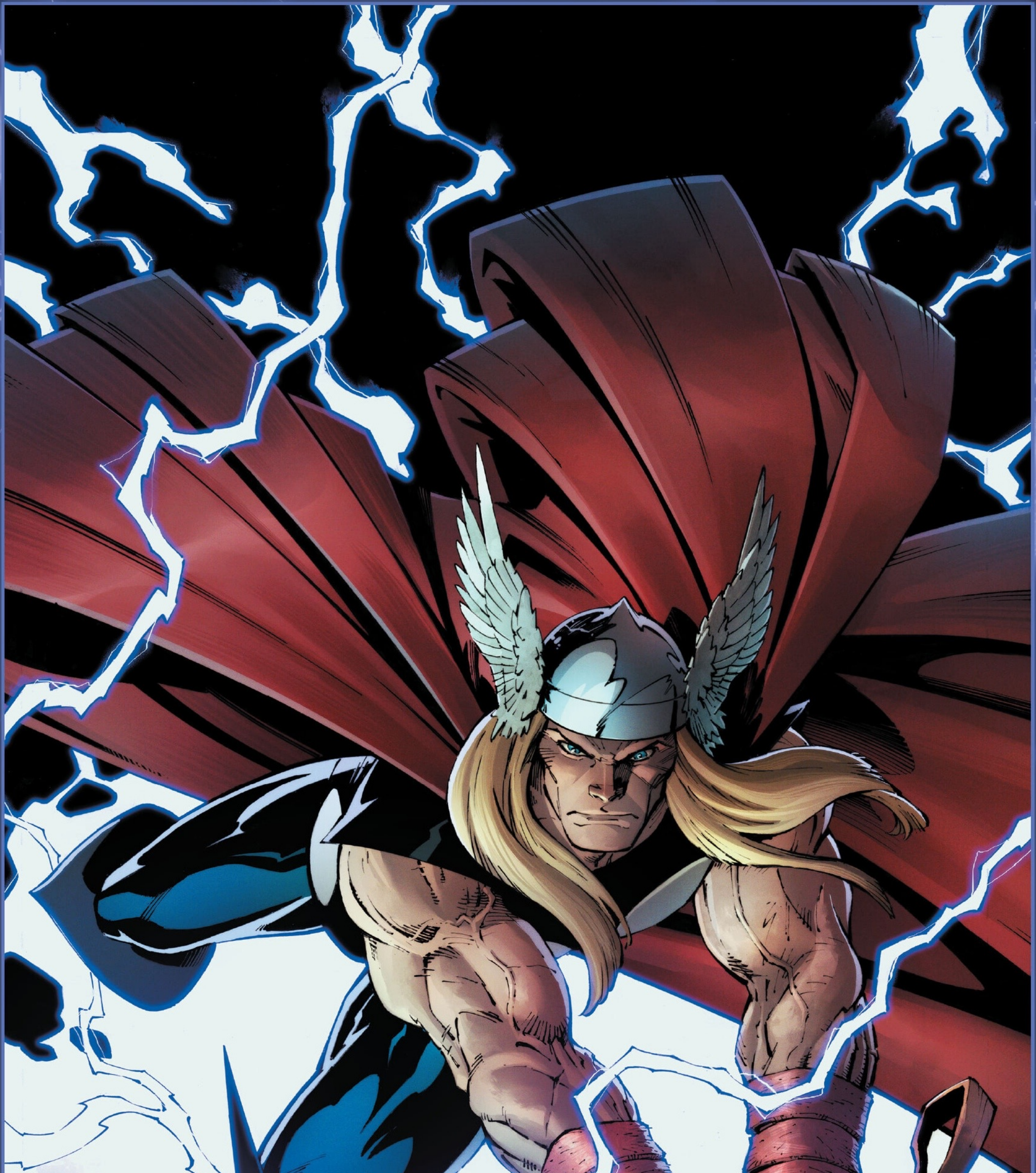


9 & Roxxon Presents: Thor #1 Connecting Variants by
Nick Bradshaw & Rachelle Rosenberg



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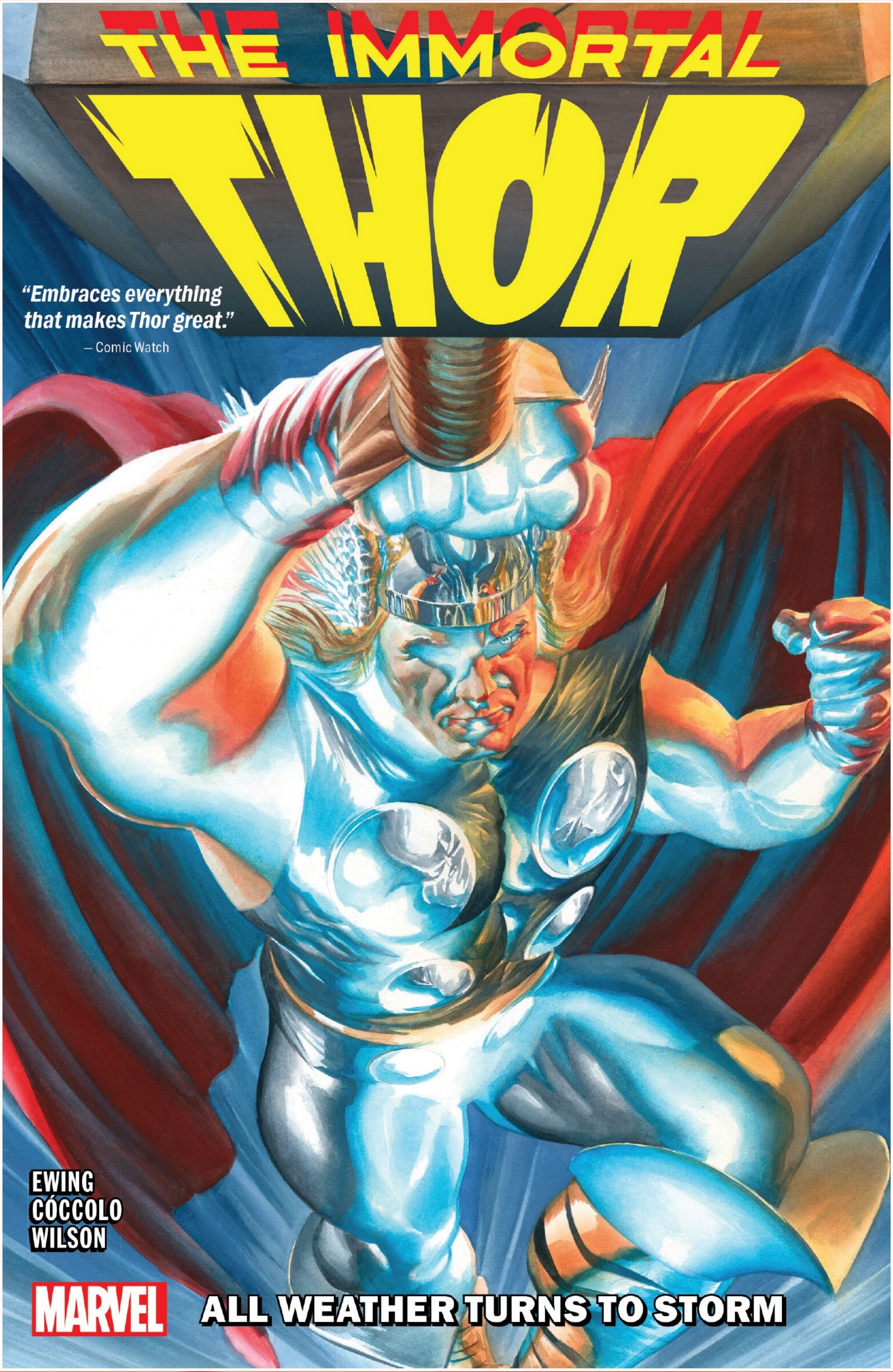
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